

A HISTORY  
OF THE  
YOUNG MEN'S  
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.



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Wm. Chauncey Lyndon  
1855



“There are periods in the history of all organizations when it is well to pause and look back, that—reducing the past and its varied experiences to a single present—a firm and well-defined base may be established upon which to erect all future structures.”—WILLIAM CHAUNCY LANGDON, “Report to the First World’s Conference,” Paris, 1855.



HISTORY  
OF THE  
YOUNG MEN'S  
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

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VOLUME II  
THE CONFEDERATION PERIOD  
1855-1861

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## PREFACE

The history of an organization resembles the biography of an individual. The value of each consists not only in the character and work of the organization or individual, but chiefly in the relation of each to life as a whole. The historian of a movement like the Young Men's Christian Association is confronted with a perplexing multiplicity of events and he must have a principle of selection. I have tried from almost a chaos to select those incidents which begot the future. If I have failed, I must beg the indulgence of my reader, as I have spared neither thought nor industry. Events are like children in a large family. It is only those members who are to render important service to the world in later life whose childhood story is significant; some of them make no contribution, others do not make a stir until late in their careers. For this reason new developments require the rewriting of history. The events and personages are the same, but they had an unsuspected meaning. A revaluation is necessary.

Recent progress has made this particularly true of the Young Men's Christian Association. The world has wondered where this unheeded organization came from, where it got its ideals and methods, why it had so much enterprise and such great success with the armies, why it had the limitations it exhibited and made the blunders it did. What is its future and what function has it in the new world order?

I am under great obligation to Jacob T. Bowne, librarian of the International Young Men's Christian Association College. Mr. Bowne established the his-

torical library of Association publications which bears his name. Without this library it would have been impossible to assemble the data necessary for the reconstruction of this period.

The manuscript has been submitted to several of my associates on the faculty; also to Richard C. Morse and Paul Super. I have asked Robert E. Lewis, General Secretary of the Cleveland Association, to make such comments in footnotes as he may see fit. I hardly need add that no one except myself is responsible for the point of view expressed in this monograph.

L. L. D.

May, 1922.

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**THE CONFEDERATION PERIOD**



# THE CONFEDERATION PERIOD

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## CHAPTER I

### THE AMERICAN CONFEDERATION

It is our purpose in the coming chapters to discuss the development of the Young Men's Christian Association during the critical years from 1855 to 1861.

The leadership of the movement was soon to be transferred to the American side of the Atlantic. The American Associations were seeking to find themselves in a new country which during this pre-Civil-War period reached a point of economic prosperity previously unequalled and then saw that prosperity overwhelmed with dire disaster. The Confederation, as it was then called, existed during a period of six years, torn by political strife over slavery and agitated by the threat of approaching civil war. The decade before the Civil War saw the economic and industrial transition to modern conditions. It was a period during which the churches were divided sectionally over slavery and during which the agitation of this issue produced a great moral enthusiasm in the North. This, combined with the serious frame of mind resulting from the financial collapse of 1857, produced the most stirring and far-reaching religious revival the country had ever experienced—a revival in which at its inception in New York City the Association was the leading factor and in the promotion of

which the Associations of the country were the chief agents.

It is necessary to examine very briefly the life of the nation during these six years in order to understand the problem of our organization which was gradually awakening to national self-consciousness.

Could a religious movement inaugurated and promoted by laymen endure? Could such an organization find a needed sphere of service? Could it clearly define its own mission and also have the power of consecutive service necessary for fruitful success? It is true that this experience demonstrated the insufficiency of volunteer leadership unaided by employed officers and revealed by the method of "trial and error" many things the Association should not attempt. But it did show how volunteers can have a wide vision, can cooperate in a sensible and unselfish manner, and can be depended upon to arrive ultimately, even though instinctively, unerringly at the right decision. While wrong decisions were reached at many conventions of the Confederation, the immediate matters of chief importance were always settled right. This chapter is a triumph for democracy. The Confederation was always sound on the great question of the founding of the international alliance of the American Associations and it is because this was accomplished in the manner it was that the Associations of all time are indebted to Langdon and the young men of 1855-1861.

#### SEC. 26.—POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The years from 1855 to 1861 were dominated in the nation at large by the struggle between the pro-slavery forces of the South and the anti-slavery forces of the North. Friends of the South in the North and many persons in the North who feared the disruption

of the Union opposed all anti-slavery measures and deprecated anti-slavery agitation. But gradually and irresistibly the North became united in its opposition to the extension of slavery and the South became "solid" in its determination to defend to the uttermost its peculiar institution. Step by step the conflict developed until the one side came to look upon the slave as property, and the other, having less pecuniary interest at stake, looked upon the slave as a man. During the six years which preceded the outbreak of the Civil War the question of slavery determined every election of importance, state or national. It also dominated every significant act passed by Congress and every step taken by the national Administration.

The first American convention of the Young Men's Christian Association when it met at Buffalo in 1854 had a young man from Kentucky as its most influential leader. The election of Mr. Helme of New Orleans as president of the convention was a guarantee that slavery should not be discussed, but the introduction of an anti-slavery resolution by the one delegate present from Canada showed how difficult it was to smother this issue even in a small gathering of thirty-seven young men who had met for a national, altruistic purpose.

The historic Missouri Compromise of 1820 had been accepted in the North as a sacred pledge that slavery would never be extended north of 36 degrees 30 minutes latitude. For thirty years this agreement had maintained peace between the two sections and preserved the Union.

The annexation of the great territory of Texas and the Mexican War undertaken at the behest of the slavery leaders to extend slave territory reawakened the slumbering apprehension in the North. The bill admitting Texas provided that it might be divided

into four states. As each of these would have two senators, there would be eight votes added to the strength of the "solid South" in the Senate. In 1850 Clay and Webster engineered the second great compromise on the slavery issue. The North, for the sake of peace and union, accepted the ignoble fugitive slave law. The South agreed that the partition of Texas should be postponed. California was admitted as a free state. The region intervening between Texas and California, then called New Mexico, was organized as a territory without the "Wilmot proviso" against slavery.

Peace between the two sections seemed restored, but the "irrepressible conflict" was only delayed a few brief years. With scarcely a note of warning Senator Douglas, in his hope of securing the support of the South for his presidential aspirations, threw the whole question again into the caldron of discussion by the Kansas-Nebraska bill.

This bill provided that the power of Congress to decide on the extension of slavery into new territories be abrogated and that the question be left for "local sovereignty" to determine. Thus the whole question of slavery extension was to be decided by the party which could muster the most votes at the time of the adoption of a constitution by a new state. This was the most important political step in fomenting the bitter anti-slavery agitation between 1855-1861. It showed that the South was determined to extend slavery. It brought on the struggle over Kansas, led to the formation of the Republican party, the unifying of the North against slavery, and the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency.

Jefferson Davis, who was the leader of the extreme slave party in the Senate, maintained not only the doctrine of Calhoun that the Constitution permitted slavery in the territories, but went further and de-

manded that slave owners were entitled to the protection of their property in new territories belonging to the national government. He did not hesitate on July 6, 1860, at the Democratic State Convention of Mississippi to declare, "In the contingency of the election of a President on the platform of Mr. Seward's Rochester speech, let the Union be dissolved." ("History of the U. S.," Rhodes, Vol. II, p. 373.)

By 1860 there was also a pronounced agitation in the South for the revival of the African slave trade.

These political questions filled the minds of the young men and their advisers who were active in the work of the Young Men's Christian Association. They were of especial moment to those who wished the organization to become not a local but a national movement.

#### SEC. 27.—MORAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS OVER SLAVERY

But even more than the political, the moral issue raised by slavery was a challenge to any organization which bore the name of Christian. The publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by Harriet Beecher Stowe synchronized with the establishment of the New York Young Men's Christian Association in 1852. The fugitive slave law of 1850 had aroused the sympathy of many Christian people in the North, and "Uncle Tom's Cabin" "was an outburst of passion against a wrong done to a race." ("History of U. S.," Rhodes, Vol. I, p. 279.) Three hundred thousand copies were sold the first year of its appearance and the sale soon reached a million and a half copies. The book was dramatized and translated into twenty languages.

(Report of Investigating Committee of New York City Association, 1857, p. 7.)

In 1853 the library committee of the New York

Association aroused considerable stir by excluding as the report states "a book called 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.'" This controversy led to a careful definition of the powers of the library committee. Its action, however, was sustained, a vote by the board being passed as follows, "Resolved that the library committee have power to exclude from the library such books as in their judgment are improper." An effort was made at the next meeting of the board to require the library committee "to report all works excluded and a statement of their reasons for such exclusion." This motion was laid on the table and the young men of the New York Association were protected from the influence of Harriet Beecher Stowe's volume. The fatherly and sheltering practice of the leaders at this time is indicated in the president's report for 1853 where he says: "It is not deemed proper that this library should contain all works from the press. Theories and opinions of every shade are freely spread upon the printed page—so that youth is compelled to pass an ordeal which, though it may possibly strengthen and expand the mind of a few, will prove fatal to others." Out of 1,009 volumes 383 were listed as "moral and religious works" and the chairman of the library committee remarks reluctantly, "While it has been our determination to exclude novels and romances, we have felt it incumbent on us to admit, to some extent, works of fiction acknowledged to be of a sound moral and religious character."

Anti-slavery sentiment evidently developed in the New York Association until it was the attitude of the dominant element of the members. Discussion over this issue reduced and nearly disrupted the organization. While the New York Association never yielded to the attempts of some of the zealous members to secure the passage of resolutions denouncing slavery, nevertheless the agitation lost to the Association



financial support and the sympathy of a considerable portion of the community. The conservative element, which was made up of many ("Life of McBurney," pp. 40-41) of the leading young men in business circles in the city, to the number of 150, decided to withdraw in a body. Their resignations were all signed to one paper; but the other party learned of this effort of the "dough-faces" and created not a little surprise when the resignations were presented by announcing a list equally long of new applicants for membership. The young men who withdrew were, however, more influential and the prosperity of the New York Association seriously declined.

The character of the agitation can be seen from the following incidents recorded in a report of twenty-four printed pages issued in 1857 by a special "investigating committee" appointed by the members of the New York Association to investigate the action of the board of directors in expelling the committee on rooms and library which occurred after a number of stormy meetings.

In the summer of 1856 a number of the Association members ("Life of McBurney," p. 40) were active in the Fremont campaign and figured in a procession given that summer.

(These statements are based on notes taken by the author in an interview with Cephas Brainerd in 1901.) "This procession was savagely caricatured by the *New York Express*, a rather violent political organ. The chairman of the library committee, Mr. George P. Edgar, excluded the *Express* from the rooms of the Association in August, 1856. This was done simply by stopping the subscription which caused no trouble; but the ground of the action became noised about and the *Express* began an attack on the Association as a political organization. Mr. Edgar on his own responsibility, and other members,

replied through the columns of the *Post*. During December, 1856, and January, 1857, a heated newspaper controversy was waged. The board of directors voted to expel the library committee and to return the *Express* to the Association reading rooms. A committee of the Association appointed to investigate the affair, after extended and animated hearings, reported that the library committee had not been fairly dealt with and asked for the resignation of the entire board of directors."

(Langdon, "Early Story of the Confederation," Year Book, 1888, p. 21.)

Langdon relates at the first public anniversary of the Washington Association, July, 1852: "We were addressed by a Southerner, the Hon. Robert M. Charlton, United States Senator from Georgia. On the next public occasion it was therefore necessary to invite a Northerner and accordingly the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop of Boston was asked for the December following. We were forced to consider national prejudices and even politics in everything. At a meeting of the board of managers, September 27, one of our Southern members—to quote my diary—'threw a firebrand among us by an attempt to expel the *National Era*, an abolition newspaper, from our reading rooms. The bringing in of politics was most desperately opposed by "several of us" and the *casus belli* was laid on the table for the present.'"

While the slavery issue was a menace to the internal development of local Associations with a divided membership like those of Washington and New York, it was a still greater obstacle in the pathway of an international organization. Langdon stated (1855 Report, p. 74) in his report to the Second Annual Convention that the Baltimore Association "earnestly requests that the Convention be assured that it is not from the want of the most sincere and

thorough Christian sympathy and affection toward the cause in which their brethren are engaged that they withhold their participation therein, but from the belief, founded on reasons elaborately urged in the report, that permanent harmony cannot be secured from the elements of which the Confederation is composed."

The opposition of Howard Crosby, president of the New York Association, has been mentioned in our discussion of the founding of the early Associations. (See Vol. I, p. 132.) He did not believe a national organization could be established.

Through his influence the New York City Association refused to enter the Confederation. It was unwilling to take its natural place of leadership as the largest Association in the country. (New York City Report, 1854, p. 11.)

The New Orleans Association in a letter to the Convention held at Cincinnati in 1855 writes (Cincinnati Convention Report, 1855, p. 51): "As a band of Christians, as friends, and as countrymen you have been called together and are therefore prepared no doubt to yield *private* opinions for the *general* good. Differences must of course exist, but they need not mar the peace of the body. Let each forget for the time his sectional prejudices and legislate for the good of the whole. Then will the croaking of our enemies be silenced."

On the other hand, in Associations in sections where strong abolition sentiments prevailed there was a growing determination not to compromise on the slavery issue. Many believed they would sacrifice their Christian principles by fellowshipping with any religious organization which was silent on this issue.

Speaking of the first Convention at Buffalo in 1854, Langdon relates: "Mr. Holland of Toronto offered a resolution which illustrated the ground of oppo-

sition to the Convention. It was to the effect that 'as in Christ Jesus there is neither bound nor free,' therefore that all young men 'of whatever degree or condition in life' be invited to an equal participation in the advantages of the Association. This resolution was without debate referred to the business committee and not reported. It was at that time the only course which could possibly have been taken. As long as slavery existed, certain social results followed. The Young Men's Christian Association neither could deal nor did it propose to deal with the institution itself. To what practical purpose were any resolutions of protest or nonrecognition of those social results? At the adjournment the president, Mr. Helme of New Orleans, frankly admitted that great fears had been entertained that the Convention would be the scene of wrangling and strife, that sectional questions would be agitated. Had the Holland resolution been admitted to debate these fears would have been realized, that they were not is the more remarkable in such a body of Northern young men."

But this lack of action at the Convention did not satisfy the Toronto Association. This Association at first approved the founding of the Confederation and then sought to induce the Central Committee to take a stand against slavery.

The great task confronting Langdon and the newly appointed "Central Committee" was to secure enough Associations as members of the proposed Confederation to establish it authoritatively. They found the slavery issue their chief obstacle and were compelled to take action announcing their policy. ("Early Story of the Confederation," Year Book, 1888, pp. 36-37.) The Association at Toronto through its corresponding secretary, C. R. Brooks, addressed the Central Committee on this subject. Brooks was also the Canadian representative on the Central

Committee. He proposed that the Central Committee incorporate in the organic law of the Associations some provisions recognizing the rights of Christian slaves to become members of the Association "as a principle which should be adopted as fundamental by any Confederation of Young Men's Christian Associations." Brooks stated that the Toronto Association had ratified the resolution to join the Confederation only by a small majority and "in the hope that when the Central Committee should adopt a constitution, some such principle would be proposed to the Associations as a test of their connection with one another."

"The Southern Associations on the other hand were equally sensitive of anything which would reflect on the Christian principle with which they conformed to the social and political conditions under which they were constituted and under which alone of course they could do their work. Some of these therefore were unwilling to expose themselves to having these principles called to question—as for instance: Baltimore, Charleston, and indeed the Association at New Orleans also."

The Central Committee accordingly issued a circular on November 18, 1854, stating that the Central Committee (Cincinnati Convention Report, 1855, p. 105) was "not a ruling power, but an agent" through which the local Associations might act and that it had no power whatever to adopt a constitution for the Confederation.

Toronto and Providence at once withdrew. The Pittsburgh Association wrote that they would send delegates to the Cincinnati Convention only on the condition "that they should be free to bear their conscientious testimony against what they believed to be a national sin."

Langdon decided to stand firm on the position that

it was not the province of the Central Committee to pass on the slavery issue.

The question of the autonomy of the local Association was also involved.

Five additional Associations refused to enter the Confederation—Portland, Maine; Boston; Brooklyn; Detroit, and Nashville.

The slavery issue even appeared at the World's Convention held at Paris in 1855. Through the request of the American delegate, Rev. Abel Stevens of New York City, a resolution was adopted as a part of the Paris Basis, which after referring to the faith and object of the Associations states: "That any differences of opinion on other subjects, however important in themselves, but not embraced in the specific designs of the Associations, shall not interfere with the harmonious relations of the Confederated Societies."

How interwoven with the life of its times is any vital organization! This simple society for the spiritual welfare of young men made necessary by the new urban conditions which industry was creating found itself even before it could realize its corporate existence tossed on the waves of political strife and social unrest.

As the controversy over slavery waxed more intense so the difficulties of the national organization increased. It is no wonder when one considers the experience of the different denominations that Association leaders despaired of creating a national organization and it is a proof of Langdon's statesmanship that one was successfully established.

In 1850 the churches were already divided on this issue. In the Senate Calhoun said: "The cords that bind the States together are not only many but various in character. Some are spiritual or ecclesiastical; some political, others social. The strongest are those

of a religious nature, but they have begun to snap. The great Methodist Episcopal Church has divided. There is a Methodist Church North and a Methodist Church South and they are hostile. The Protestant organization next in size, the Baptist Church, has likewise fallen asunder. The cord which binds the Presbyterian Church is not entirely snapped, but some of its strands have given way." ("History of U. S.," Rhodes, Vol. I, p. 128.)

In 1854 during its passage the Kansas-Nebraska act had called out a petition of protest to Congress which was signed by Rev. Stephen H. Tyng of New York, one of the vice-presidents of the New York Association and a delegate to the Paris Convention of 1855, by Rev. G. T. Bedell, and Chancellor Isaac Ferris, both of whom attended and addressed the meeting at which the New York Association was organized (1852), and by Rev. Theo. L. Cuyler, who was the most active clergyman in New York in supporting the work of the Association.

Rev. Lyman Beecher of Boston joined in a similar protest signed by 3,050 out of 3,800 clergymen of New England. Mr. Beecher had delivered the address at the founding of the Boston Association and was one of the four clergymen upon whose advice the evangelical church basis for active membership was adopted by the Boston society.

This petition was couched in strong language. ("History of U. S.," Rhodes, Vol. I, p. 478.) It said: "The undersigned clergymen of different religious denominations in New England, hereby in the name of Almighty God and in his presence do solemnly protest against the passage of what is known as the Nebraska bill. . . . We protest against it as a great moral wrong, as a breach of faith eminently unjust to the moral principles of the community and subversive of all confidence in national engagements; as a measure

full of danger to the peace and even the existence of our beloved Union and exposing us to the righteous judgments of the Almighty."

("History of U. S.," Rhodes, Vol. II, p. 152.) The Kansas-Nebraska bill of 1854 which permitted slavery in a new territory, but left it for the people to decide whether the territory upon becoming a state should exclude or permit slavery, brought on the armed conflict over slavery in Kansas. The North hastened into Kansas settlers who favored freedom. These men were armed with "Sharp's rifles," then considered superior weapons. The slavery leaders of the South in a similar manner sent armed representatives to the debated territory. Early in 1856 Buford's battalion of 280 armed men assembled at Montgomery, Alabama, in the Baptist Church. "The Methodist minister solemnly invoked the divine blessing on the enterprise. The Baptist pastor gave Buford a finely bound Bible and said that a subscription had been raised to present each emigrant with a copy of the Holy Scriptures. . . . A distinguished citizen made an address, saying, 'on them rested the future welfare of the South; they were armed with the Bible, a weapon more potent than Sharp's rifles.'"

Mr. Rhodes in his history of this period further states (Vol. II, p. 153): "The most warlike demonstration and one which excited the greatest attention, was at New Haven, Conn. Charles B. Lines, a deacon of a New Haven Congregational Church, had enlisted a company of seventy-nine emigrants. A meeting for the purpose of raising funds was held in the church shortly before their departure. Many clergymen and many of the Yale College faculty were present. The leader of the party said that Sharp's rifles were lacking, and that they were needed for self-defense. After an earnest address by Henry Ward Beecher, the subscription began. Professor Silliman started it with



one Sharp's rifle; the pastor of the church gave the second; other gentlemen and some ladies followed their example. As fifty was the number wanted, Beecher said that if twenty-five were pledged on the spot, Plymouth Church would furnish the rest. The number of rifles wanted was subscribed. Previous to this meeting Beecher had declared that for the slave holders of Kansas the Sharp's rifle was a greater moral agency than the Bible and from that time the favorite arms of the Northern emigrants became known as "Beecher's Bibles." The anti-slavery tide rose higher and higher in the North and the determination to maintain slavery even to the point of secession strengthened in the South. The difficulties of preserving the unity of the Confederation increased. The Southern Associations were given every consideration. The International Convention was held in 1857 at Richmond, in 1858 at Charleston, in 1860 at New Orleans, and the one for 1861 was scheduled for St. Louis. At the New Orleans Convention W. F. Munford of Richmond was chosen president. The attendance of delegates at these conventions was larger from the South than from the North. The Central Committee for 1860 was located at Richmond. The Association at New Orleans issued a magazine which circulated widely among other Associations.

Affectionate greetings and interchange of good fellowship neutralized to a degree feelings of antagonism, but these could not alter the fact of a widening divergence of conviction. At the Montreal Convention the delegates were given a reception on the top of Mount Royal. At Richmond an entire day was spent in an excursion into the surrounding country, and at Troy, in 1859, the largest convention of this period, the nearly 300 delegates were taken in a body by the Troy Association to Saratoga Springs, where a dinner with post-prandial speeches was served in

truly modern style. But none of these occasions equalled the reception extended at Charleston in 1858 and at New Orleans in 1860. As if shrinking from imminent separation the fellowship of these co-workers was the more intense.

At the Charleston Convention the first afternoon in place of formal addresses of welcome was spent in a sail around the harbor and a picnic on Sullivan Island. The Report (1858, p. 11) states "that the steamer sailed past Fort Sumter to Sullivan Island . . . martial music waking patriotic echoes . . . under the gentle reign of peace, on the spot where patriot blood was shed . . . when independence was born and present national happiness ushered in." The report speaks of the influence of this social fellowship as a bond of union which would "long survive the separation and vicissitudes of life." At New Orleans in 1860 the hymn of welcome written for the occasion says, "Here we meet in unity." The entire convention marched later in the procession at the unveiling of a statue of Henry Clay. In his address of welcome at the opening of the Convention, Rev. J. B. Walker said, "We know no North, no South, no East, no West, but love our common country from ocean wave to ocean wave and for the preservation of the institutions of that country we will labor with men and intercede with God."

Fort Sumter was fired on one year later on April 12, 1861. President Lincoln issued his first call for troops on April 15. On May 6, as a last appeal for peace, William T. Munford of Richmond jointly with Joel B. Watkins, former chairman of the Central Committee, addressed the following communication to the "Young Men's Christian Associations of North America":

"Brethren: We have determined, by the help of God, to address you in the character of peace-makers.

In connection with the Confederacy of Christian Associations, we trust that we have secured the confidence and love of many of your members and we are conscious that we sincerely reciprocate their sentiments. You will then regard with some respect the statements we may make in reference to the present condition of our country. Many of those who participated with us in the Christian fellowship which was exhibited by the delegates from the various parts of our beloved country at the annual conventions held in Troy, Charleston, Baltimore, Cincinnati, and New Orleans, will doubtless be willing to unite with us in an earnest effort for the restoration of peace and goodwill between the contending parties.

“Through the distorting medium of the press, there is a misunderstanding between the North and the South as to their respective positions. If there could be a fair representation of the sentiments of the better portion of the people at the North and the South, we should not present the melancholy spectacle of a great nation involved in a civil war, which must be productive of the most disastrous consequences to the material and spiritual interests of each section. The separation of the South from the North is irrevocable, and the sooner this great fact is acknowledged by the nations of the earth the better will it be for the interests of humanity. The conquest of either section by the other is impossible. You can have no doubt of the truth of this proposition, if you consider the teaching of all history in regard to the ability of an invaded country to repel its invaders, where the numbers are nearly equally divided, and the courage of each is unquestioned. In the present contest there is a unanimity of sentiment on the part of the South to maintain its independence and to repel invasion, which has been unexampled in the history of the world. In this community almost every person capable of bearing

arms is ready to volunteer in the service of the State. Our Association, and even the ministry, is largely represented in the ranks of the army. The South has no desire to invade the soil of the North, or to take from it any of its rights. We only ask to be permitted to govern ourselves in accordance with the principles which were guaranteed in the Constitution of the United States, and which were maintained by the North and the South in the Revolutionary War. The wisest and best men of both sections recognized these principles, and we do not now advocate a war of aggression or conquest.

"As Christians let us discountenance the misrepresentations of each other, which are so frequently made, and let us labor earnestly in the cause of peace. In November last, we united in a call upon the President of the United States for the appointment of a day of humiliation and prayer to Almighty God for a blessing on our country, and in answer to our prayers the fratricidal hand has thus far been withheld by a merciful providence. Let us again unite our prayers and efforts for the restoration of peace and goodwill between the Northern and Southern Confederacies.

"With the sincere hope that we may be able to congratulate you at our approaching Convention in St. Louis upon this auspicious result, we remain yours, fraternally,

"WM. P. MUNFORD,

"JOEL B. WATKINS,

"WM. H. GWARDHMEY."

On May 14 the New York City Association replied as follows:

"Bible House, New York, May 14, 1861.

"To Wm. P. Munford, Joel B. Watkins, Wm. H. Gwardhmey.

"Gentlemen: Your letter of the 6th inst. has just

reached me. Like every other document which comes from the South, there is in your letter a mixture of truth and error. For instance, you say, 'Through the distorting medium of the press there is a misunderstanding between the North and South.' Now it is true that the press has 'distorted' the truth in certain instances in the North, and entirely suppressed it in the South in every instance where it did not accord with the interests of slavery. But I cannot believe there is any longer a 'misunderstanding between the North and the South.' There is but one question now—viz.: *Have Southerners the right to rule the Union until they lose an election and then destroy it?*

"The South says, 'Yes.' Young and old, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, religious and unconverted, North, East, and West, say 'No.'

"The whole North recognizes the war as a holy effort to maintain good government. The cross upholds the flag on our churches, and in every assembly the good old Union hymns are sung amid tears and cheers of generous, godly people who yet love you and pray for you, though they deny, and will die before they will consent to, the right of secession. The only possible way for us to consent to separation is through a National Convention. Come back to your allegiance, call such a convention by your votes in Congress, and you can certainly go. This will be regular. But our very existence is imperilled by your hideous 'secession.' No government could stand a year upon such a basis. We never can admit it. We are not ignorant of loss and hardship, and we can learn death. But we cannot consent to throw away that for which our fathers fought nor to call our glorious government a failure.

"Indulge me in one word more. Slavery is wrong, you have determined to defend that wrong. You have counted no cost in defending it even before it was as-

sailed but have been willing even to destroy our government for fear it might be. May God forgive you; your position is utterly false and my heart bleeds that men calling themselves Christians can connect themselves with so wicked a cause, even calling it holy and daring to compare it with that of our God-protected fathers!!

"Your Christians will meet ours in battle. The 7th regiment of New York numbers many of our members; the 12th and the 71st as well; and tomorrow the 9th takes others—active earnest Christians. Doctor Tyng's son is second in command of a company now in Washington. My friend, Mr. Abbot, corresponding secretary of the Trenton Association, is also under arms. Mr. Haddock of Troy writes me the same.

"Upon you and your 'institution' must rest the responsibility of this fratricidal war, and shirk it or dissemble it how you may, God will require an account of every man who abets the treason of the South. I cannot pray for the Southern Confederacy.

"NOBLE HEATH, JR.,

"Cor. Sec., N. Y. Young Men's Christian Association."

The leaders of the Association had struggled for nine years to eliminate slavery discussion and all agitation from its religious meetings and its international convention programs.

It was this experience with slavery agitation and later with the prohibition of the liquor traffic which has led the Association to become neutral on all moral questions when they become political issues. The same difficulty has arisen more recently over the economic struggle between "Capital and Labor." Robert R. McBurney of New York City, the most influential leader of the Association movement, in 1888 announced as one of the nine settled principles of the

organization "that when questions of moral reform become political party questions, our Association, *as such*, can have no connection with them."

One must with reluctance admit the necessity for this policy on the part of an interdenominational international organization. If it is to survive it must not as an organization engage in a contest for the advancement of this or that current movement for righteousness. However burning your zeal for social justice, your enthusiasm for prohibition, or your eagerness to free the slave, you cannot advocate your cause on the platform of an interdenominational international religious association for the salvation of young men without disrupting the organization. Before the Civil War the Association had but a partial existence nationally and would have disappeared as a national organization entirely if the views of the Congregationalists of New England on slavery or of the Southern Methodists of Georgia on the same theme were allowed to be expressed on the platform of the International conventions.

The question is whether there is an adequate permanent field for an organization which devotes itself to the religious education of young men and boys, which inculcates the teachings of Jesus Christ, but which must refrain from urging their application to a particular situation as soon as this becomes a party political issue, that is, as soon as there is a prospect of the ideal being practically realized. This would seem to paralyze action at the very moment when it was worth while and most needed. It seems like desertion of the right and cowardice in the face of opposition.

The answer is: that the Young Men's Christian Association is not the only agency for action or expression; the members under the inspiration of its teaching should as citizens and Christians organize or ally

themselves under other auspices with persons like-minded with themselves for the immediate reform or promotion of the moral issue at stake. McBurney illustrated this method when he joined with Anthony Comstock in founding the Society for the Suppression of Vice rather than carry on that work under the New York Association with which it originated. Later Association leaders have taken a prominent part in promoting the Playground Movement of America, the Boy Scout organization, and the Laymen's Missionary Movement.\*

The period under discussion was one when the Association was seeking to find itself. It did not succeed in doing so completely; it floundered and in the main failed to discover its true mission, but it took one step forward by elimination. The leaders of the Association recognized that the Association was not to become a society for moral reform by means of political action. There have been some notable exceptions to this practice. As soon as the North was committed to the war for the Union, the Associations of the North allied themselves with all the zeal and enthusiasm of young manhood with the cause of the Union. Enlisting was stimulated, funds were raised, and the great work of the United States Christian Commission was established. During the great World War there has been a similar outburst of unanimity which has overridden all counsels of neutrality. The Associations entered the war as a holy crusade against

\* Glen K. Shurtleff (General Secretary, Cleveland, 1893-1909) was the most constructive social mind in the general secretaryship. He formed a Social Service Club of influential and growing Clevelanders who promoted investigations and reform through various organizations or efforts independent of the Association organization. The founding of the Juvenile Court, the building and operation by the city of public bath houses, the founding of The Municipal Association and Civic League, the reform of the Jury System, and the calling of several successive national conferences on social service were conspicuous results.—R. E. LEWIS.



despotism and militarism. The Association buildings of England and Canada were often enlisting headquarters. American Associations both local and military became the centers of political discussion. Instruction to the soldiers in the war aims of the government was one of the great services rendered by the "Red Triangle" huts.

Whether the avoidance of questions of moral reform when they are adopted by political parties will continue to be the policy of the future is difficult to foretell. The International Convention for 1919 held at Detroit approved the declaration of the Federal Council of Churches supporting many of Labor's contentions against Capital and many students at the recent Student Volunteer Convention at Des Moines returned home dissatisfied because of the "stand pat" attitude of that Convention and the obscuring of the social message. Several of the large forum meetings held on Sunday afternoons, like the one at the Bedford Branch, Brooklyn, or at Springfield, Mass., are open for the discussion of live current issues but in the industrial Associations the secretaries must hold an independent position between Capital and Labor. It may be said, however, that for the fifty years following 1855 the experience with the slavery issue established the principle of neutrality on political questions for the Young Men's Christian Association.

#### SEC. 28.—INDUSTRIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

The decade preceding the Civil War saw important steps in the transition of American life from the agricultural to the industrial stage. The prosperity of this period has already been mentioned. This was practically uninterrupted in the South and continued until the panic of 1857 in the North and the West.

Slavery was the cornerstone of Southern prosper-

ity; cotton and rice depended on slave labor for profitable production.

("History of U. S.," Rhodes, Vol. I, p. 497.) The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill in 1854 raised the hope of the extension of slavery into Kansas. "It was thought in the border states that if a new slave state could be created it would add five per cent to the value of slaves, which were already very high. The planters in the cotton states being buyers of negroes did not regard the rise of value as an unmixed good but they did not grumble. They cast about for a remedy. The reopening of the African slave trade began to be discussed seriously in South Carolina and Mississippi."

While the rest of the country was still struggling with depression, the South went prosperously on its way. Mr. Rhodes quotes from the *New York Times* of March, 1859, as follows: "There is no disputing the fact," writes a correspondent from New Orleans, "that the Southern portion of the Confederacy is in a highly prosperous condition—perhaps never more so. Of all the great staples produced, the crops during the past year have been abundant, sales active, and prices high. . . . No species of property has felt the effect of this state of affairs more sensibly than the negroes. The average price of field hands may be stated at \$1,500 and the tendency is upward. Al 'niggers' sell for \$1,750 to \$2,000. These rates were never reached but once before. . . . The South is getting out of debt and beginning to accumulate surplus capital."

It is true that the "poor whites" of the South were indigent and could not compete with slave labor, but they never set themselves against the system.

In spite of the supposed cheapness of slave labor it is an interesting economic fact that the free industrial states of the North were steadily and unmistakably outstripping the slave states of the South. The period

we are discussing closed with a disastrous panic and a devastating civil war, and yet before the slave power fell the free states had gained an unapproachable economic supremacy. They had entered upon the industrial age which is only fairly beginning with the New South of the present time. In fact, the rapid increase in population and wealth of the North over the South was one of the reasons leading to secession. The slave leaders saw both economic and political supremacy irrevocably slipping from their grasp.

What was the cause of the rapid rise to industrial power of the North? The answer is: Intelligent free labor and the introduction of the railroad, the telegraph, and agricultural and manufacturing machinery.

The descendants of the Puritans had peopled and conquered the central Northern states and were already pushing into the territory west of the Mississippi River. Bancroft states that in 1834 the descendants of New England were one third the white population of the United States. That the 4,000 families (21,200 persons) who migrated from England to New England between 1620 and 1635 had in 200 years an average of 1,000 descendants for each family or a total of 4,000,000 persons. The new immigration from Ireland and the continent of Europe, which began with the Irish famine of 1848 and the checking of the European revolutions of the same year, flowed into the Northern States. The immigrant avoided slave territory. This immigration brought with it the Catholic Church and many race divisions, but it was of great economic value. The meteoric rise and fall of the "Know-Nothing Movement," which was opposed to Irishmen and Catholics, illustrate these conflicts.

Rhodes remarks (Vol. II, p. 51): "The efforts of the Catholics (1854) to exclude the Bible from the pub-

lic schools struck a chord which has not ceased to vibrate. The ignorant foreign vote had begun to have an important influence on elections and the result in large cities was anything but pleasant of honest, efficient government." The immigration between 1850 and 1860 was greater than the preceding decade and was not again surpassed until the new immigration movement which began about 1870. The growth of the population was amazing but the interesting fact of great moment to our theme is that the city population of the North was growing more than twice as rapidly as the rural population.

The high cost of living is said to have begun in 1850 (Rhodes, Vol. III, p. 112); the concentration of wealth began in this decade and the growth of city slums (Rhodes, Vol. III, p. 64).

During this decade the North was beginning to shake off the provincialism and isolation which it inherited from colonial and revolutionary times. The individualism of "Yankeedom" and the crudeness incident to pioneer life were to a degree giving way to the cosmopolitan spirit. The great impetus to this change as already intimated was from the railroad and the telegraph. These and immigration from Europe coupled with the migration westward have given a fluid dynamic character to American life. Herbert Spencer in speaking of the influence of intercommunication brought about by the railroad and the telegraph says ("Sociology," Vol. I, p. 575): "Within a generation the social organism has passed from a stage like that of a cold-blooded creature with feeble circulation and rudimentary nerves to a stage like that of a warm-blooded creature with efficient vascular system and a developed nervous apparatus. To this more than any other cause are due the great changes in habits, beliefs, and sentiments characterizing our generation."

The industrial North with its large cities was to give to the world the modern Young Men's Christian Association. The new type of life was over-stimulating to young men. Their natural instability of temper was accentuated by the growth of the city and the lure of the Great West. Rev. C. M. Butler of Cincinnati at the Association Convention held in that city in 1855 said (Cincinnati Convention Report, 1855, p. 33), "The times have crowded into our youth the combined characteristics of the boy and the man and have subjected them to the dangers which belong to both." Young men in politics, in industry, and in social life held a position of leadership never occupied by them before. They illustrate Kipling's "Feet of the Young Men":

"They must go, go, go away from here!  
On the other side the World they're overdue.  
'Send your road is clear before you when the old Spring-  
fret comes o'er you  
And the Red Gods call for you!"

The decade of 1850 to 1860 in the United States was one of the greatest in world history and it is small wonder that young men felt its stimulus, that they thronged its rising cities, manned the growing industries, and put the same enthusiasm and aggressive spirit into the religious organization which they espoused.

The relation between national economic prosperity and organized religious or educational progress is more intimate than is generally supposed. It is true that the great revival of 1857 and 1858 followed almost as swiftly as the thunder-clap follows the lightning upon the heels of the financial panic of October, 1857, but it is also true that the financial depression of that period sapped the organic life of many Associations. Membership in many of the Associations fell

off. This condition also affected other voluntary organizations. Many library associations formally considered the expediency of disbanding. The Young Men's Christian Association experienced a similar depression later, following the financial crises of 1873 and 1893. In 1859 the deficit of the New York City Association was wiped out through the efforts of Benjamin F. Manierre but reappeared to the amount of \$1,000 in 1860. The New York Association report for that year states: "The Association is still alive. We do not intend to rehearse all the difficulties and troubles which have attended its life. Like many benevolent associations at the present time we are somewhat in debt, our expenses having considerably exceeded our receipts, and owing to the peculiar state of the times we have not been able to carry out a plan which we hoped would relieve us from further anxiety in financial matters." The report following the outbreak of the war states that they were burdened "with a debt of nearly \$2,400 which had been incurred by previous boards of directors and suffered to accumulate until its magnitude had become appalling and had seriously paralyzed not only all efforts to reduce the liability but all active interest in the Association itself."

\* \* \* \* \*

Note: The smallness of the financial affairs of the Associations of these early days is seen from the budgets reported at the Cincinnati Convention of 1855 (Cincinnati Convention Report, 1855, p. 100). "The last report of a few societies shows the annual receipts as follows: Buffalo, \$850; Rochester, \$720; Philadelphia, \$1,089; St. Louis, \$1,114; Baltimore, \$1,475; Washington, \$1,500; Montreal, £302; San Francisco, \$2,045; Brooklyn, \$2,135; New York, \$3,621; Boston, \$4,097.

## SEC. 29.—PROBLEMS OF THE CONFEDERATION

Having discussed the relation of the Association to slavery, the great political and moral issue of the pre-war period, and having examined the economic and social environment in which the infant organization found itself we must now turn our attention to the development of the organization itself.

The main problems of this period were: First, the establishment of the Confederation with its Central Committee and conventions.

Second, the discovery of the true aim and sphere of the Association movement.

Third, the definition of the relation of the Association to the Church.

Fourth, the proper basis of active membership for the control of the local Association.

## CHAPTER II

### THE LEADERS WHO MOULDED THE THOUGHT AND LIFE OF THE CONFEDERATION

Before setting forth the attempt to solve these perplexing problems in statesmanship, we will devote our attention to some interesting personalities—the *dramatis personæ* of the movement. There were a number of stalwart young men typical of American life before the Civil War who determined the policies and laid the foundations of the Association. Scarcely one of them was over thirty years of age. They were earnest, practical men, free from cant, who accepted the traditional religious teaching of their day, but were remarkably progressive in adopting new methods of work.

#### SEC. 30.—WILLIAM CHAUNCY LANGDON

The leading figure of this period was unquestionably William Chauncy Langdon of Washington, who had been instrumental in founding the Washington Association and who was the chief promoter of the Buffalo Convention which created the Confederation.

How can the career of so remarkable a young man as William Chauncy Langdon be presented in the brief space at our disposal? Its idealism, its enterprise, its intrepid courage, its vicissitudes, its teeming opportunities, its myriad contacts with all classes of society, its world outlook, were possible only to an American youth who came to young manhood in the



great transitional decade from 1850 to 1860. Langdon embodied the spirit of his times as completely as he did it unconsciously. He might have been a great scientist. He might have been a great lawyer. He certainly abandoned unusual business opportunities. Many young men decide to enter the ministry before they know whether they can achieve business success or not. Langdon at twenty-five relinquished a business which he himself had built up to yield \$10,000 a year—a large prospect in 1856.

Langdon came to Washington in 1851 in a period of transition. He writes ("Story of My Early Life," p. 71): "The period at which the course of my life had thus brought me to Washington was, in some respects, one of the most remarkable in our history. It was a great transition epoch which assembled, in the political arena, the most brilliant gathering of public men which Washington has, perhaps, ever seen. It was the last great crisis of the older issues. It was the dawn of those which were now to come. It was that in which the Whig party only lingered on the theater of action with its great leaders, Clay and Webster; in which the old Democratic party was re-organizing itself for new questions; in which the Republican party first appeared in the Senate in the persons of Seward and Chase and Sumner. Calhoun had, indeed, passed away the year before; but, with those already named, Badger and Soulé, Berrian and Sam Houston, King and Jefferson Davis, were there from the South; Cass and Benton, Crittenden and Douglas, from the West, with many others scarcely second even to them.

"To occupy a government office—however modest such a position might be—at such a time, to be living in the public life of such a period, to come into personal relations with some of these men, would have been a privilege at any age; to be entering upon my

early manhood in such a time and place and under such circumstances, was a rare climax of an exceptional education."

Langdon came of an important New England family. Yet he grew up in New Orleans. Before he was sixteen years of age he had lived in Washington, in several Southern cities, in a college community, on a Southern plantation, in several New England cities, and in Iowa and Illinois. He was highly connected and yet the loss by his father of the entire family resources by the defalcation of a trusted clerk reduced the family at one period to the most straitened circumstances, and the heroic struggle of Langdon to secure a college education because he was too proud to make an explanation to his well-to-do New England relatives is a touching romance.

Langdon was born on the outskirts of Burlington, Vermont, on the shores of Lake Champlain. Because of the precarious health of his mother his father decided to take his young wife and child first to Washington and later to Louisiana. A tender episode is the letter of Langdon's mother written for her boy then less than a year old who she at that time expected would soon be without her loving care. ("The Story of My Early Life," pp. 6-7, Langdon.)

"March 11, 1832. All is purity and innocence about you, my darling baby, and my heart is so full of love to you and delight in you now and hope for you in the future, that words are weak in the attempt to express what I feel.

"You have been lent me by our kind heavenly Father and I ask Him to assist me in the care of you. I desire first of all things, to teach you to give your infant heart to Him; to have a childlike love and confidence toward Him and to remember that whatever may give you pleasure comes from His goodness and love for you. Would that your little heart could

grow into manhood, unstained as it is now, and need not the severe discipline of this world's trials, to purify it for heaven.

"If it please God to take away your mother before you—even before you learn to know her love—remember, my dear, dear boy, you had in her a friend who would have borne anything to save you from suffering, and who would only have been happy if she saw you in the way of goodness. Such happiness as I ask of heaven for you, my darling little one, you will never find, but in the path of goodness and usefulness.

"When I think I may leave you in this world of temptation, I tremble: then I look at the sinless expression of your little face and feel sure you will be guarded from evil. To the tender care of an Almighty Guardian your fond mother commends you."

In 1836, when Langdon was five years old, the family moved to Louisiana. It was while they were in this state that the resources of the family were lost through a trusted clerk who was sent with a stock of goods to the new republic of Texas, and the struggle with adverse circumstances began. It was also a little later that Langdon's father served as a colonel in the Mexican War. During his boyhood Langdon was attacked by both yellow fever and cholera. His most remarkable experience resulted from his decision at fifteen, true to New England tradition, to seek a college education.

He determined to earn the money needed. He says, "The thought occurred to me to prepare a game of cards illustrative of English history." This he did. He undertook to both publish and sell these himself, and later added a similar game illustrative of American history. He began first at Mobile and then at New Orleans. In the printing office where he was setting up the type one of the printers remarked, "If you

would go to New York or Boston and publish these in the best style of the trade you would very likely make enough to enable you to go to college." Langdon, though only fifteen, persuaded his father to let him undertake this venture. In Mobile and New Orleans he cleared \$95 and started with his mother to visit relatives in Iowa and Illinois. On the steamer and all along the route he took orders for his game "at \$1.50 a pack, most people paying him in advance." He established an agency at St. Louis and leaving his relatives at Galena, Ill., set out alone by stage for Chicago. He took orders on the lake steamers and at hotels and at a number of places established agencies, reaching Boston in the summer of 1846. He says ("Early Story of My Life," p. 25), "It is remarkable that though traveling much of this time entirely alone, though it might have been supposed that I had money with me, not a person, as far as I knew, made any attempt either to cheat me or beguile me in any way out of it and not one in any way to do me any moral wrong."

In Boston young Langdon was received into the home of his uncle, George Ticknor, an eminent literary man and publisher, who had been Longfellow's predecessor in the chair of literature at Harvard. Another of Langdon's uncles was governor of Vermont and his uncle, B. R. Curtis, became associate justice on the supreme bench at Washington. During the few months he was at Boston perfecting his game and securing its publication he had remarkable opportunities at his Uncle Ticknor's home. He says ("Early Story of My Life," p. 26): "Here during the three months of my stay in Boston I saw and was brought into contact with very many persons whom it was then a privilege to meet and whom it has since been a great pleasure to remember. My uncle's library was a gathering place for a large number of

the most highly cultured and most noted people of the time and place. Not only my Uncle Curtis came and Mr. Savage, but Webster, Prescott, Longfellow, Everett, Abbott Lawrence, the Appletons, and Agassiz (then lately come to America), and many others. Some or other of these were often at dinner and on almost every evening when the Ticknors were not themselves out . . . some of these with great kindness invited me to come and see them, Mr. Abbott Lawrence, Mr. Prescott, and Mr. Longfellow particularly."

All of these friends and many others subscribed for young Langdon's game. His Uncle Ticknor wrote of him at this time ("The Story of My Early Life," p. 27): "He is a clear-headed, active boy, better able to manage his own affairs than most men ten years older. . . . He knows how to adapt his means to his end with great skill." His uncle then spoke of Langdon's "sweetness of disposition" and "the practical efficiency of his character." He also expressed anxiety lest success and notoriety should make him conceited and superficial. On August 26 Langdon attended the Commencement exercises at Harvard University.

Having completed the publication of his games Langdon started for the South, selling games himself and establishing agencies in New York City and elsewhere. He had an especially successful experience in Washington, where his family had many friends, one of whom presented him to President Polk, who subscribed for Langdon's game, as did also the Vice-President and each member of the Cabinet. This was true of a whole list of noted men, including Webster and Calhoun. Langdon now journeyed South taking orders in various cities, and reached New Orleans in April, 1847, before his sixteenth birthday, having expended on this enterprise \$1,200, all of which had

been covered by the receipts. It is true that he found he could not reap an adequate return from his game without persistently promoting it, but a lad with such enterprise was sure to find a way through college. His New England relatives proposed to provide for Langdon a preparation for college at an academy in Vermont. This plan was accepted and while Langdon ranked high in his studies, for some reason he did not fit in well and upon completing his course, though without receiving a diploma, he determined to return South. Later he entered as a freshman at Transylvania University in Kentucky, and graduated in three years. At the age of twenty he was made assistant professor in science and astronomy at Shelby College. Of his college days Langdon says: "I was buoyant and full of life. I rose early and gave from ten to twelve hours daily to study and recitation." Langdon became a lecturer on astronomy and before he was twenty-one was elected a member of the National Institute for the Promotion of Science.

Langdon received an appointment as assistant examiner at the patent office in Washington, which he accepted in May, 1851. From this position he was advanced four years later to be chief examiner, when he was but twenty-four years of age. One year later he resigned and opened an office as a patent expert, one concern alone retaining him for part of his time at \$5,000 a year. Langdon developed a bold plan for an international patent business which was of much promise.

During these years from different directions important religious influences had affected Langdon. His father was an Episcopalian, his mother a devout Unitarian through the ministrations of Doctor Channing of Boston. Langdon says of his mother while she was a resident of Hanover, "she was surrounded by the influences and associations of the strictest

New England Congregationalism, by which she was subjected to virtual persecution to bring her more liberal and loving views of God and of the Christian life into closer conformity with a severer type of theology."

Langdon, however, became attached to the Episcopal Church. He desired to be confirmed at ten years of age but the bishop was unwilling to receive him until he was twelve years old. He was a member of a Bible class in New Orleans, which influenced him greatly, and during his trip for selling his game of cards he became acquainted at Hartford with an Episcopal clergyman who urged him to prepare for the ministry and who offered to provide for his entire education. This offer Langdon courteously declined, but it was in a measure due to the later influence of this same clergyman that Langdon decided to enter the ministry.

In Washington he identified himself at once with Trinity Episcopal Church, of which Dr. Clement M. Butler was then the rector. Here Langdon became an active worker. He taught a Bible class of young men, four of whom entered the ministry. He also met Thomas Duncan, a government clerk in the treasury department, who upon reading an account in a British paper of the London Young Men's Christian Association proposed such an Association for Washington. William Rhees of the Smithsonian Institution and Zalmon Richards united in a movement to establish the Washington Association in 1852. Of this society Langdon became the first corresponding secretary.

Service in the Young Men's Christian Association deepened Langdon's religious interest. Upon returning from the first convention he joined with Rhees in establishing a mission Sunday school. Writing of this he says, "On Sunday, October 1st, 1854,

I took a leading part in starting an enterprise which eventually became in one sense a bridge over which I entered into the practical work of the ministry." ("The Story of My Early Life," p. 98.)

In starting this mission Sunday school Langdon had the help of nine other young men. They gathered over a hundred children. This mission later developed into a branch of Trinity Church. The persuasions of Doctor Butler and later of the young woman who became his wife were the final influences which led Langdon to abandon business, give up his lingering desire to become a scientist and devote himself to the ministry. He began his theological studies while still in the patent business in 1856.

Early in 1857 he went abroad for rest, study, and travel. It was on this journey he visited many European Associations. He was ordained in the spring of 1858 and became assistant rector of St. Andrew's Church, Philadelphia. Langdon had become deeply interested in Protestant work in Italy and in the unity of Christendom. His visits to Italy awakened in him the hope that the Episcopal churches of England and America might through the interest of the "Old Catholic Party" be able to reunite the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. He went abroad in 1859 and remained almost continuously until 1875.

For many years Langdon devoted himself to church unity. He founded Episcopal churches at Rome and Geneva, and was present at the "Old Catholic Congress" at Cologne in 1872. Shortly afterwards he returned to America much broken in health. Langdon served a number of churches for short periods, but eventually was obliged to retire. He wrote a number of treatises on the Catholic reform movement. His last days were spent at Providence, R. I., where he died when sixty-four years of age, in 1895.



In 1887 he wrote a carefully prepared account of his efforts in founding the international alliance under the title of "The Early Story of the Confederation of the Young Men's Christian Association." This was written as a lecture at the request of J. T. Bowne, the recently appointed head of the secretarial course of the training school at Springfield, Mass. Langdon gave this lecture to the first senior class at the school. It was received with deep interest and, owing to the large amount of original material contained in it, was published in the Year Book of 1888 by the International Committee.

Langdon later presented the Historical Library with his collection of books, papers, manuscripts, and letters of the pre-war decade of Association history.

An entirely new generation of leaders had arisen in the Association during the twenty years Langdon was abroad and he never reestablished relationships in any active way upon his return to America. He addressed the Employed Officers' Conference of North America at their meeting in Providence. Shortly before his death he was present at the International Convention of 1895 at Springfield and was introduced to the delegates at the opening session.

Langdon in many respects surpassed the men who were active in Association work in his day. In scholarly attainments, in intellectual gifts, in social and family connections, in travel and experience, he was easily the leader. His exact training in science and his careful practice as a writer in the patent office developed gifts of analysis of no mean order.

He had a faculty of getting at the bottom of a problem, of pursuing it to the smallest detail and not leaving it until he was confident he had found the right solution.

In later years he thus describes himself at the time he founded the Central Committee ("The Story of

My Early Life," p. 62): "I had inherited from my mother and from her family a sensitive organization, clear perceptions, and a scholarly temperament, a natural capacity both for acquiring and for imparting knowledge—and from my father, considerable force, persistency, tenacity, and pride of character. . . . My mother had been the one chief and most intimate companion and confidante of my childhood and youth. . . . My mother's religious influence had ever been both sincere and practical. . . . My chief talent was for organization and administration; my power was in what has been termed 'a constructive imagination' and in a faculty for marshalling all the information of which I was possessed in its relations to the matter in hand and for such concentrated application of my mind to that one thing that for the time being everything else ceased to exist for me."

It is one of the tragedies of life to find a man with Langdon's fine idealism surrendering glowing material prospects to devote his splendid enthusiasm to the baffling task of reuniting the divided branches of Christendom. His services in federating the scattered Young Men's Christian Associations of North America in the early fifties may prove to have accomplished more for promoting Christian union than all the direct endeavors of his later life. The importance of this has been vaguely recognized by Association officers and not at all by other religious leaders. The sketch of Langdon in Appleton's "Encyclopedia of American Biography" describes his work in Italy and his writings, but in no way alludes to the most important service of his life, the federating of the American Young Men's Christian Associations, the shaping of their international policy by his dominant personality, and the influence this has had in promoting Christian unity. There can be little doubt that it was Langdon's contact with the Association and his

enthusiasm for interdenominational endeavor that directed his life effort toward the great ideal of reuniting Christendom.

Langdon was temperate in his views regarding slavery. No other young man in the Association of that day had had so extensive an acquaintance with the national life of our country both North and South or was so well qualified to pilot an infant international organization. He knew the New England point of view. His mother was a Unitarian and a disciple of Channing. He had studied in a Vermont academy and had lived in Boston. He had visited for months in the free West. He spent most of his boyhood in New Orleans and Mobile. He knew the Southern attitude toward slavery. At one time his father owned a slave and Langdon was cared for when he was a child in Washington by a "black mammy." Later he tried to help one of their negro women servants when the young colored man she was to marry was sold and about to be sent to a distant state. He was a college mate of Vice-President Breckenridge, of Kentucky. Just after Langdon's ordination, the Vice-President, at the opening of Congress, invited him to conduct the religious exercises in the Senate and reminded him of their college experiences.

When "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was written it appeared as a serial in the *National Era*. Langdon, with Rhees and others, prevented the exclusion of this paper from the Washington Association reading room. The New York Association suffered seriously for lack of similar wise leadership. Langdon believed that the institution of slavery could not be overthrown by any action of the Young Men's Christian Association and that Christian young men should not allow their difference of opinion on even so vital a matter as this to prevent their fellowship, their

working together in the same organization, or their treating each other as brethren.

The chief leaders of the period were located in Washington, Cincinnati, Buffalo, and Richmond, and at its close in Philadelphia. Important contributions were also made by individuals from New York, Cleveland, and New Orleans.

The most influential religious movement of the period was the revival of 1857, which was fostered by the New York Association, but in the main the leadership of the Association movement was as stated above.

It will be noted that the cities named were each in turn the seat of the Central Committee and so for the time being the capital of the Association Confederation. These men who led the movement all at various times served on the Central Committee and were frequent delegates at the International conventions. Service on the committee and attendance at these annual gatherings provided the training school which developed these leaders.

#### SEC. 31.—ZALMON RICHARDS

Associated with Mr. Langdon at Washington were William J. Rhee and Zalmon Richards.

Richards was an active member of the Baptist Church and one of the founders of the Washington Association. He became its second president and was interested in Langdon's proposal of a confederation of all the American Associations.

As president of the Washington Association in his annual report (First Washington Report, p. 7) he said, "Voluntary Associations do not owe their efficiency so much to their constitutions and by-laws as to the zeal and faithfulness of their members in carrying out the laws they have." Richards, however,

proved a strict constructionist regarding the Articles of Confederation. He loyally supported Langdon and Samuel Lowry in their attempts to establish a Central Committee without authority and strictly advisory in character. He also took the practical position that the Association should keep itself free from the discussion of slavery.

Richards was a delegate to the first convention at Buffalo, where he took an active part. He was a member of the credential committee and was chairman of the business committee. It was to the business committee that the anti-slavery resolution was referred which would have disrupted the convention. His most important service at Buffalo was the presenting of the report embodying the Articles of Confederation, by the adoption of which international supervision was assured.

Richards became a member of the first Central Committee (Buffalo Convention Report, 1854, p. 40). While Langdon was absent in Europe Richards was one of the few members of the "old guard" present at the Richmond Convention of 1857. At this convention he served on three committees; he was chairman of the nominating committee which organized the convention, a member of the business committee which carried out the program, and also of the committee on the Central Committee's report which recommended the policies for the coming year.

At Troy, 1859, at the critical convention of the Confederation, Richards was again a delegate. An essay by Lowry on the purpose of the Confederation was read in his absence by Richards. Langdon stood alone for the proposition that the Church and not the Association was the proper agency for the general propagation of the gospel to the whole world. Richards did not support Langdon but he did oppose allowing the Central Committee the power of passing

on the admission of local Associations to the Confederation. He said (Troy Convention Report, 1859, p. 43), "We ought especially to guard against giving any more power to the Central Committee of the convention." He also said he would "fight tooth and nail" any resolution giving the committee power to reject a local Association. In this he was defeated on the ground that organizations have the right of deciding who shall participate as members.

#### SEC. 32.—WILLIAM J. RHEES

The leading progressive among the little group of Association leaders was William J. Rhees, one of the founders of the Washington Association, to which he gave much time voluntarily as librarian.

Rhees was one year younger than Langdon. He received his M. A. degree when twenty-two years of age and became chief clerk with the Smithsonian Institution. He spent his life in Washington and was one of the inner coterie of gentlemen in the capital city who devoted themselves to the promotion of science.

Rhees was present as a delegate at the Buffalo Convention and he attended all of the conventions of the Confederation period except the final one at New Orleans. This was true of no other leader. When Langdon felt that his efforts to establish the Confederation had aroused so much opposition that it would be for the interest of the Central Committee to withdraw his name from membership even though the headquarters were transferred to Cincinnati, Rhees was appointed in his place. Rhees served on the Central Committee longer than any other Association leader of this period. He was a member during the administration of the Washington committee. Each successive convention until the year 1866 ap-

pointed him as the district member for Washington. To no man of the Confederation except Langdon is the early Association movement under more obligation. Rhees was open-minded, more liberal in his ideas than most of his associates, and he stood for a more progressive policy.

In his report as librarian of the Washington Association (First Washington Report, 1854, p. 66) he said, "In the selection or reception of books, the library committee have always thought it proper to reject nothing which was of high moral character and literary merit, whatever might be the religious or political views advocated." "Our knowledge of each form of belief should be gained from those works which advocate them and not from opponents."

At the Buffalo Convention he opposed the resolution recommended to all the Associations "to admit into their libraries no work which is unfriendly to evangelical Christian faith." At the Buffalo Convention Rhees was chosen secretary. He rendered the same service at Montreal, getting out the convention report. At Buffalo he opposed the proposition of the Boston delegate that Associations be entitled to vote at conventions in proportion to their membership, for fear this would give the large organization undue control.

At the first convention his chief services were in connection with the discussion of the work of the Association and the basis of membership. He wrongly favored the broad program for the work of the Association rather than for young men only. Rhees was chairman of the committee to whom was referred the evangelical basis for membership. He drafted the statement (First Buffalo Report, 1854, p. 35): "We, therefore, acknowledge no creed but the Bible and we are ready to welcome all young men whether members of evangelical churches, or of no

church, to our Associations, . . . preserving, however, by such provisions as each Association shall deem necessary the control in the hands of those who are active members of evangelical churches. Your committee think that as few restrictions and distinctions as possible should be adopted by our Associations which would tend to keep from a cordial cooperation in our great moral enterprise any body of professing Christians, however much they may differ from a majority of us in faith."

Rhees early conceived the idea that active membership should be limited to members who render a service. At the second convention at Cincinnati he advocated the plan of the Washington Association—that all new members be elected as associate members and that only those rendering a service be later chosen as active members, office holding and voting on the constitution being the only function limited to members of evangelical churches. The Montreal Convention (1856) spent three sessions on the membership issue, over two of which Rhees presided. No further decision was made at that time. At the Charleston Convention (1858) a session was devoted to Rhees' idea that active membership should be limited to members "actually active." The convention voted "that it was not prepared to give an affirmative response," but stated that it was a matter worthy of careful consideration by local Associations. Rhees was an unwearied advocate of local option on the question of a test for active membership—a conviction later shared by Cephas Brainerd.

Rhees at Cincinnati (1855) proposed the establishment of the *Quarterly Reporter*, which became the chief means of promotion of the Association cause in the early days. While Langdon was abroad as a delegate to the European Associations, Rhees served as foreign secretary of the Central Committee.



At the Montreal Convention he showed his progressive spirit far in advance of the times by proposing (Montreal Convention Report, 1856, p. 15) a resolution: "Whether any means can be provided by Young Men's Christian Associations for the physical development and promotion of the health of their members by gymnasiums, baths, etc.," and also "the practical influence of theaters and similar places of amusement." These resolutions were referred to special committees and were the first discussions of these subjects which were destined to influence most profoundly not only the work of the Association but its whole temper and spirit. The introduction of the physical department as a means of developing character is the greatest contribution to religious thinking the Association has made, and the idea that wholesome amusement should be used to make religion attractive to young men led the Associations to take the point of view of the young man and begin at his dominant interest rather than seek to admonish or exhort him. The resolution on physical education was laid on the table, but a fairly progressive resolution on amusements was adopted (Montreal Convention Report, 1856, pp. 65-67), though a later convention at the same city in 1867 reversed this action.

One plan of the Central Committee assigned to Rhees failed. The committee undertook under his leadership to establish a lecture bureau for the lecture courses throughout the country, but while some eminent lecturers like John B. Gough were introduced to Associations, the plan broke down. Rhees was instrumental in raising the debt incurred by the first Central Committee which had been unpaid for two years. He showed a keen interest in the financial affairs of the Central Committee. At the Richmond Convention in 1857 as chairman of the committee on the Confederation he recommended (Richmond Con-

vention Report, 1857, p. 16): "That we endeavor to obtain one thousand subscriptions for the *Reporter*, as the amount thus obtained will defray all the expenses of publication and provide a sufficient sum for the Central Committee to increase their means of usefulness and the general good. This plan is believed to be the best for raising the fund required to carry on the operations of the Central Committee."

At the Charleston Convention Rhees made a most important proposition that the Central Committee add to its service the visitation of the Association by members of the committee. These visits were to include unorganized towns with a view to establishing new Associations. This plan was approved by succeeding conventions and became a permanent policy which has expanded into the employment of a large body of traveling secretaries.

Rhees never seems to have accepted Langdon's belief that the Association should confine its efforts to work for young men. In this opinion he followed the sentiment of most of the Association leaders and failed to see the real sphere of the Young Men's Christian Association. At the Charleston Convention (1858) Rhees presided at the session on "The True Sphere of the Young Men's Christian Association." Two sessions were devoted to discussing this issue and the Cincinnati resolution was reapproved. This to a degree satisfied both the advocates of a broad field and a specialized field. It favored the building up of "Christian character and Christian activity among young men."

At the significant Troy Convention Rhees opposed Langdon on this issue. He held that the Association (Troy Convention Report, 1859, p. 58) should engage in evangelistic work and maintain mission Sunday schools for the masses. He quoted from the report of the Buffalo Convention to prove that Langdon was

in error in claiming that general evangelistic effort by the Associations was "a novel doctrine." This position was in keeping with Rhees' last effort at an Association convention. After the Civil War was over, at the Philadelphia Convention in 1865 (Philadelphia Convention Report, 1865, p. 46) he supported a resolution of one of his fellow delegates from Washington proposing to establish an "American Protestant Association" and (p. 85) true to his early convictions, advocated "Mission Sabbath Schools" on the floor of the convention. One of Rhees' important services was in collecting the records and publications of this period. His relation to the Central Committee and the foreign Associations gave him an unusual opportunity. Some of these documents were destroyed by fire. This led him to gather new copies and these, with others he possessed, were given to the Library of Congress. Later, in 1890, he gave many early documents and publications to Bowne for the Historical Library.

It will be seen that international supervision as embodied in the conventions and the Central Committee owes a great debt to the early Association leaders at Washington. Langdon, Richards, and Rhees had the vision, the consecration, the intelligence, and the industry to inaugurate this work. The broad, statesmanlike leadership and keen intellectual insight of Langdon were equalled by the liberality and breadth of spirit of Rhees in his attitude toward theological questions and his prophetic, progressive advocacy of physical training and wholesome recreation as features of the Association program.

There is a distinct let-down in the intellectual quality of the Association leadership as it passed from the Washington group, although there is an intensifying of religious zeal.

## SEC. 33.—WILLIAM H. NEFF

The Cincinnati group assumed management of the Central Committee at a critical time in 1856. The Confederation was by no means firmly established and it was proposed to shift headquarters to a new center. This was done at the Cincinnati Convention by the appointment on the Central Committee of five local members. Of this committee, H. Thane Miller became chairman and William H. Neff became the chief executive under the title of home secretary. This title was afterwards changed to corresponding secretary.

Neff had been a delegate at the Buffalo Convention where, next to Langdon, he was the most influential leader. He prepared the first draft of the Articles of Confederation and served on the committee to which these articles were referred. Neff made the motion for their final adoption and advocated them in an earnest appeal.

Neff was chairman of the local committee for entertaining the second convention at Cincinnati and called that gathering to order. The second Central Committee, during the year he was its corresponding secretary, did much to shape the character of the Confederation. In his report at Montreal Neff said (Montreal Convention Report, 1857, p. 49), "The Committee 'considered that the Associations had entered into this Confederation for their mutual encouragement, cooperation, and more extended usefulness' without yielding up any portion of their own independence or without giving to the Confederation or its agents any power whatever to interfere in any respect with the local affairs of any Association."

The committee extended its own organization by appointing district corresponding secretaries in all parts of the country. Seven new Associations united

with the Confederation. The most important advance was the establishment of the *Quarterly Reporter* as the organ of the Association. The first issue of 500 copies appeared January 30, 1856. Neff bore the chief share in editing this quarterly, which was circulated among all the Associations both at home and abroad. He said, "The Committee considers the subject of a periodical by far the most important of those committed to them by the convention and spared no pains in making the necessary arrangements."

Neff was made president of the third convention held at Montreal, in 1856. He did much to promote the international fellowship of that gathering and in his farewell remarks said, speaking of the fear of war between Great Britain and the United States (Montreal Convention Report, 1856, p. 70), "By resolution we have set apart the first Tuesday in August as a day of humiliation and prayer and we would respectfully invite you to unite with us on that day in imploring our heavenly Father to avert the calamity which seems to be gathering around and impending over us."

Neff was reappointed to the Central Committee but was unable to serve. During the following year he visited a number of Associations in Europe.

#### SEC. 34.—SAMUEL LOWRY, JR.

Samuel Lowry, Jr., became Neff's successor as corresponding secretary of the Central Committee. Lowry was a delegate at the first convention at Buffalo where he reported for the Cincinnati Association and was a member of the business committee which considered the Articles of Confederation. He was also active in entertaining the second convention. Lowry did not attend the Montreal Convention, but

as neither Neff nor H. Thane Miller was present at Richmond (1857) he bore the entire responsibility of representing the committee.

At Richmond he presented the Central Committee's annual report and served as chairman of the business committee. The annual report of the committee stated "Resolutions requesting action upon 'the observance of the Sabbath,' a 'report on Sabbath schools,' and 'communications on Sabbath schools,' were considered by the committee as beyond the sphere of their duties."

A. G. Cummings, a corresponding delegate from Philadelphia, introduced a series of resolutions at this convention, proposing that the convention recommend measures to enforce Sabbath observance and that the action of the Bible Society in issuing a new edition of the Bible be condemned because, the mover claimed, it contained alterations. Cummings also proposed the adoption of a constitution and by-laws for the Confederation. These matters were referred one by one to the business committee of which Lowry was chairman and were stoutly opposed by him. All these propositions were rejected by the convention, but they consumed much valuable time. Lowry in the *Quarterly Reporter* (April, 1858, p. 30) further discussed the desirability of simplicity in the constitution of local Associations and urged the folly of adopting a hard and fast constitution for the Confederation—a plan urged by abolition sympathizers.

When the headquarters were transferred to Buffalo Lowry was made district secretary of the committee for the Ohio district. He was unable to attend the large convention at Troy in 1859, but at the request of the Central Committee prepared an essay on "The System of the Confederation." Lowry pointed out that the isolated situation of the early societies and their need of information and help were the chief

reasons for the establishment of the Confederation. He enumerated the difficulties encountered and stated that the Confederation was based on two principles: "first, that it shall not legislate for nor exercise authority over the local Associations; second, that the Associations of which it is composed in their relation to it and to one another shall be placed upon an equal and independent footing." He discussed the advisory function of the convention and remarked: "The appointment of the Central Committee is given to it without reserve in order to assure to the Associations the control of that organ. It is the manifest design of the convention to sustain and foster by its influence the individual Associations rather than to aggrandize the Confederation."

In an article in the *Young Men's Christian Journal* (February, 1859, p. 30) Lowry warns against the disposition to divert the Associations from work for young men into an organization for union prayer meetings and lay preaching. He says, "The novel and interesting nature of the labors referred to should not be allowed to obscure the peculiar claims of young men upon organizations especially designed for their benefit." It is obvious that Langdon would have had one supporter if Lowry had attended the Troy Convention and also that Lowry did not approve of the general evangelistic work which the Cincinnati Association was then promoting. In the *Young Men's Christian Journal* in September, 1859, following the Troy Convention, Lowry discussed the relation of the Association to the Church. He advocated more clearly than most of his contemporaries that the field should be limited to young men. He was insistent that a special agency was needed and that it did not interfere with the prerogative of the Church any more than did the Sunday school or any other work carried on by loyal laymen. He asserts, "Generally

those who have been most conspicuous in the Association have been among the foremost in the labors of their respective churches."

Lowry in 1859 visited the parent Association at London and the Associations at Dublin, Belfast, and Paris.

#### SEC. 35.—H. THANE MILLER

No man of this decade was regarded with more affection or was destined to have so long a period of service in the Association as H. Thane Miller of Cincinnati, who began his contact with the convention in his home city in 1856 and continued it until his death forty years later in 1896. During the greater part of these years Miller was blind and yet with an abounding cheerfulness and apparently unhindered by his affliction he presided at both state and international conventions, addressed meetings, and served on committees. He was most effective as a lay evangelist and as a solo singer of gospel songs. He brought a spiritual enthusiasm into the Association movement. He allied himself unreservedly with the cause and, while he led in the general evangelistic work of the days before the Civil War, he adapted himself without difficulty to the fourfold work for young men championed later by Brainerd and McBurney.

During the fifties he advocated "the general propagation of the Gospel" for all classes, which was so earnestly opposed by Langdon. At his first convention in 1856 at Cincinnati he appealed from President Langdon's decision that the Articles of Confederation forbade the convention passing on the evangelical test for active membership.

Upon adjournment of the convention he was elected to fill a vacancy on the new Central Committee located at Cincinnati. He became its chairman and served in this capacity for two years. He did



not attend the conventions at Montreal and Richmond but he did attend the convention at Charleston following the revival of 1857 and 1858. At Charleston he served actively as chairman of the committee on the Confederation but his chief interest was in urging visitation by members of the Central Committee. This he began personally upon returning home when he became secretary for the Ohio district (*Quarterly Reporter*, 1858, July, p. 75). A "Christian mass meeting" was called by the Cincinnati Association to hear reports of the Charleston Convention. This was attended by from two to three thousand people. Miller, then president of the Association, presided. At this meeting it was decided to form a "universal Christian union" to promote evangelistic meetings. Miller became president of this union. The eleventh annual report of the Cincinnati Association (1859) recounts experiences so typical of the influence of the revival that they are here recorded (*Young Men's Christian Journal*, 1859, p. 37):

"Like other Associations the past year the Cincinnati Association has taken an active part in the great means made use of in this country to carry the gospel to the masses and the use of which affords the best evidence of good results claiming to arise from the extended revival of the past year.

"The principal work of this society . . . has been that known all over the land as the 'Union Tabernacle Movement.' . . . The plan of preaching under canvas was first proposed and attempted by the Philadelphia Association who dedicated their first tent on the first day of May (1858)."

The Cincinnati tent was largely devoted to "lay preaching." During the summer over one hundred services addressed by laymen were conducted. When cold weather arrived halls were rented and the meetings continued.

The next step of the Cincinnati Association was to organize evangelistic teams or delegations to tour neighboring towns and cities and even whole states. Meetings were held at county seats and local teams organized to promote gospel meetings in all sections of the county. "In every place the meetings have been thronged and the labors of the brethren attended with great success. Dead professors have been awakened, young Christians encouraged, and a fresh zeal in the cause of Sabbath schools inspired."

The *Young Men's Christian Journal* in December, 1859, in referring to this work says, "In our judgment it proves the Cincinnati Association to be the best organization of the kind in the country."

The revival and those promoting it had carried the Association cause so far away from the ideals advocated by Langdon and Neff that an Association conducting state-wide evangelistic campaigns and "Union Tabernacle Meetings" for the masses was recognized by the official organ as the standard Association of America.

#### SEC. 36.—GEORGE H. STUART

George H. Stuart, a merchant of Philadelphia, was the most prominent business man in America identified in the early days with the Young Men's Christian Association. He was twice invited into the National Cabinet but declined. He was active in religious work, became chairman of the Central Committee when its headquarters were established at Philadelphia in 1860, and during the Civil War rendered the Association and the cause of the soldiers untold service as chairman of the "United States Christian Commission." He was one of the eight American delegates at the Paris Conference of 1855.

He was one of the founders of the Philadelphia

Association in 1854, became its first president, and continued in that office during the entire pre-war period. Both in temperament and experience he came into sharp opposition to Langdon. With H. Thane Miller and many other laymen he developed a deep interest in evangelistic effort. The revival of 1857-1858 found him ready to take a leading part and he brought the Philadelphia Association into it with enthusiasm.

On March 18, 1858, as chairman of the noon prayer meeting at Jayne's Hall, Philadelphia, he sent a greeting by telegram to the Fulton Street noon meeting in New York. "To Mr. W. Wetmore, Fulton Street Meeting—Jayne's Hall—Daily Prayer Meeting is crowded, upwards of 3,000 present, with one heart and mind they glorify our Father in heaven for the mighty work he is doing in our city. . . . Grace, mercy, and peace be with you." ("Noon Prayer Meeting of the North Dutch Church," 1858, p. 75.)

This meeting began in a small way in Philadelphia in a church in November, 1857. The February following it was transferred to Jayne's Hall and immediately became largely attended. One of the attendants of the time described it as follows ("The Noon Prayer Meeting of the North Dutch Church," 1858, p. 273):

"The sight is now grand and solemn. The hall is immensely high. In the rear, elegantly ornamented boxes extend from the ceiling in a semi-circular form around the stage or platform; and on the stage, and filling the seats, aisles, and galleries, three thousand souls at once on one week-day after another, at its busiest hour, bow before God in prayer for the revival of His work. The men and women, ministers and people, of all denominations or of none, all are welcome—all gather.

"There is no noise, no confusion. A layman con-

ducts the meeting. Any suitable person may pray or speak to the audience for five minutes only. If he do not bring his prayer or remarks to a close in that time, a bell is touched and he gives way. One or two verses of the most spiritual hymns go up 'like the sound of many waters'; requests for prayer for individuals are then made, one layman or minister succeeds another in perfect order and quiet, and after a space which seems a few minutes—so strange, so absorbing, so interesting is the scene—the leader announces that it is one o'clock, and punctual to the moment a minister pronounces the benediction, and the immense audience slowly, quietly, and in perfect order, pass from the hall, some minister remaining to converse in a small room off the platform with any who may desire spiritual instruction.

"No man there, no man, perhaps, living or dead, has ever seen anything like it. On the day of Pentecost Peter preached; Luther preached; and Livingstone, Wesley, and Whitefield! Great spiritual movements have been usually identified with some eloquent voice. But no name, except the Name that is above every name, is identified with this meeting. 'Yes,' said a clergyman, on the following Sabbath, 'think of the prayer meetings this last week at Jayne's Hall, literally and truly unprecedented and unparalleled in the history of any city or any age; wave after wave pouring in from the closet, from the family, from the church, from the union prayer meetings, until the great tidal or tenth wave rolled its mighty surge upon us, swallowing up for the time being all separate sects, creeds, denominations, in the one great, glorious, and only Church of the Holy Ghost.'"

While this revival largely promoted by the Association was in progress, Langdon had returned from visiting the European Associations, had been ordained to the Episcopal ministry and assumed his

first post in Philadelphia. He was now foreign secretary of the Central Committee and sought to ally himself with the Philadelphia Association. He states ("Early Story of the Confederation," p. 40):

"I had returned from Europe, for my part, with very clear conceptions of the Association as a body of Christian young men, whose errand was to young men; of their true sphere as that of Christian work to be done by young men for young men.\*

\* There is no hint in these historic pages that the Association had discovered the boy. The young adult was well known to Langdon and his period. The ardent supposition of the Stuarts, the Thane Millers and of Eells, that the Association should not be limited to young men even, but should be a general evangelistic agency, gives no prophecy of its final purpose and direction.

Were the early founders of the Association Movement mistaken in their psychology?

Did they think that character was formed after a young man reaches his majority, or before?

The history of the Movement shows that they concentrated their means upon providing Association buildings for adults. For long decades the minds of the founders of the Association were concentrated upon the establishment and progress of the Association amongst men.

In the operation of the early Associations the religious work was largely one of reformation. The central idea was to "snatch brands from the burning." Sunday meetings inside the Y buildings and outside were for the purposes of reformation. The appeals were of that evangelistic nature which deals with men who have "gone wrong." Much of it was of the nature of the present-day city mission work. The Association was largely made up of two elements—a class of privileged men who had maintained their self-respect and the larger group of unassimilated men who were "going wrong."

The psychology of all this was to the effect that the Association was a reform movement in personal character, that it was a rescue service in the community. Men did not stop to think seriously in those days, as far as the records show, of the infinite waste in human character of attempting a local and national program primarily upon the "reform" basis.

The new psychology is nearer to the heart of God. It is nearer to His purposes for mankind. The Association of the future must concentrate its forces and its program upon formation of character, rather than the salvaging of derelicts.

What does this mean if applied practically to the Association's

"Of the Association at Philadelphia, George H. Stuart was at that time the president, the representative man, and the leading spirit. Not one of our organizations was ready to go further than this society in any and in every good work and with what were now my own clear conceptions of the special objects of the institution and my strong convictions of both the duty and the necessity of restricting ourselves to the definite sphere of a specific work. Nowhere could I have found myself more completely out of accord with the local Associations. In fact, I now, on the threshold of my own ministry, for the first time heard it freely claimed that our Associations were called to enter upon the whole work of preaching the gos-

program and extension? It means that boys and men under twenty-one, rather than men who have passed their majority, must receive the bulk of the Association's attention.

Why? In the present age the answer is simple and so clear that the man who "runs may read." A youth's time may be said to be divided into three almost equal parts—eight hours of schooling and study, or work, each day, eight hours of sleep and eight hours of undirected time. It is the latter one-third of a youth's time which the Association must be qualified to help direct, the one-third when the boy is not under his schoolmasters, neither is he under the discipline of the home.

The average home is not equipped to absorb the recreation hours of youth; neither the parlor, the library, the dining room, the cellar nor the bedrooms are equipped for recreation purposes, and yet the youth craves recreation and must have it for his normal growth more than any other elements of desire in his day of twenty-four hours. The appeal that is made to him is not primarily one of reformation, but one of formation. He is in that exuberant, optimistic, forward-looking, impetuous period when all the habits and processes of life are going through the selective process. He is then the hero worshipper and the idealist.

The early Associations, by and large, largely ignored the youth in all his period of struggle and concentrated their attention upon him after he had reached his majority and, for the most part, selected his occupation and was soon to prepare his own home. A tremendous amount of reformatory work was necessary because of the bad starts. If the start had been right, how much less heart-burning and also sometimes futile effort to change character which had become set.—R. E. L.

pel and of evangelizing the world for which the Church and the ministry had proven *unequal*.

"At a meeting of this Association, late in 1858, I endeavored to combat this tendency but found the whole society against me; my position being utterly condemned by everyone."

Stuart, as one of the foremost Association leaders, went as a delegate to the Troy Convention of 1859. He was immediately chosen president, being nominated by a committee of which Cephas Brainerd of New York was chairman. Stuart presided over the debates of this convention, which continued through five days. This convention was filled with the enthusiasm of the great revival and centered its chief thought on the mission of the Young Men's Christian Association.

This the Troy convention decided was to be evangelization of the masses.

Stuart, for the American Sunday School Union, presented each delegate with a copy of "The Union Prayer Meeting Tune Book." The Philadelphia Association also gave to each delegate a copy of a book on the revival entitled "Pentecost."

It was into the hands of men like Miller of Cincinnati and Stuart of Philadelphia that the leadership of the Association passed from men like Langdon, Rhee, Neff, and Lowry. Ever since its inception there have been in the Young Men's Christian Association these two types of leaders representing these two ideals for the organization. George Williams, Miller, Stuart, Moody, and men of their spirit have been evangelistic in temper, interested in immediate religious transformation, regarding the Association, the Church, and all religious effort as a means for creating religious interest. These men have given spiritual power to the movement, awakened enthusi-

asm, and led men to become active workers. They were men who were strongly emotional.

On the other hand, there have been the leaders who have seen the significance and relationships of the organization, the fundamental necessity for a permanent work, and the supreme value of a program of religious education for the development of the whole man—Langdon, Brainerd, McBurney, Morse, and men of their insight have been the statesmen of the Association movement, who have directed its course, developed its program, and built it into the structure of modern life.\*

#### SEC. 37.—HOWARD CROSBY

No picture of the *dramatis personæ* of the Confederation period would be complete without reference to Howard Crosby and Richard McCormick of New York City. In view of the conspicuous leadership of the New York Association since the outbreak of the Civil War, the reluctance of that Association to take any part in the national affairs of the organization at the time of the Confederation is the more noticeable.

Howard Crosby was the man chiefly responsible for this attitude. His career shows him to have been a man of leadership and of vigorous intellectual life. He is perhaps the most widely known man of any of the active leaders of this period. Professor Crosby was twenty-six years of age when the New York Association was founded in 1852 and was at that time professor of Greek at New York University, his Alma Mater.

\* Shurtleff as the social mind of the movement had an important influence; Mott as the force for world-extension; Crackel as the continuous demonstrator of the necessity and practicability of work for boys, and Robinson as the national pioneer, added the Boy Age to what had previously been a young men's program.—R. E. L.



In 1861 he entered the ministry. For twenty-eight years he was pastor of the Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York City and later chancellor of New York University. The Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church was in the same city block with the first Association building erected in 1869. Professor Crosby became one of the vice-presidents of the Association at its organization in 1852. The following year he was chosen president and served in that office for three years during the period when Langdon and his associates were seeking to establish the Confederation.

Professor Crosby was the chief opponent of this undertaking and succeeded in keeping the New York Association out of the Confederation.\* It was due largely to Professor Crosby's strong advocacy that this Association centered on its local affairs. The New York Association became absorbed in work for young men by young men and because of its isolation from the Confederation and the extent of its own field was never led away into general evangelistic effort. This was in spite of the fact that the revival of 1857 and 1858 arose largely under the leadership of the New York society.

In his first report (Second New York City Report, May, 1854), one month before the Buffalo Convention, Professor Crosby said: "A proposition for a

\* There have continued to be prominent Association men who followed the example of Mr. Crosby and strenuously fought for the limitation of the prerogative of federation or, as it is known in modern days, "supervision." Several international conventions in the white heat of discussion revolved around this issue. The theory to this day is that supervision, as over the Young Men's Christian Associations, represents "overlook" only. We still lack a democratic system of representation, of apportionment of support, of authority and of control of that authority by the local communities. There are elements of strength in the lack of centralization, but it must be recognized also that there are elements of continuous weakness.—  
R. E. L.

convention of delegates from all the Young Men's Christian Associations in the United States was lately made to this Association from a sister society with the main object of considering the propriety of establishing a central organization and a central organ. As such centralization seemed to militate with the necessarily local character of our field of effort . . . this proposition was declined by us as well as by similar Associations of other cities."

A year later, in his second report, Professor Crosby saw no reason for changing his opinion. He said, "We desire to avoid anything like national centralization in a work so purely local as ours." He did, however, accept the Central Committee as a committee of correspondence.

His fear of disruption of a national organization over the slavery issue was an equally compelling motive with Professor Crosby. This is seen in his correspondence with Langdon, whom he always treated with the utmost courtesy.

#### SEC. 38.—RICHARD C. McCORMICK

During this period Richard C. McCormick was the member of the New York Association most interested in the progress of the movement at large. McCormick became a distinguished man. He began business life as a broker in New York in 1856. One of his great services to work for young men was editing, during the two years 1858-1859, one of the first monthly publications devoted to the affairs of young men. This was entitled the *Young Men's Magazine* and had a considerable section in each issue devoted to the American and foreign Young Men's Christian Associations. This activity led McCormick into the editorial department of the *New York Evening Post*.

During the Civil War McCormick was an active

war correspondent. Following the war he was drawn away from Association affairs by the acceptance of an appointment as governor of the territory of Arizona, where he resided for many years. He became active in national political life, at one time serving as assistant secretary of the treasury and later commissioner-general to the Paris Exposition. He was invited to accept the mission to Mexico but declined. McCormick also produced a number of important volumes.

In May, 1853, McCormick was elected corresponding secretary of the New York Association and was brought into contact with Langdon, who held the same office in the Washington Association. He did not share Professor Crosby's opposition to the establishment of the Confederation. In 1854, having learned of McCormick's plan to visit Europe, President Crosby appointed him as a delegate to the Associations abroad. He was the first American to make an extended tour of the European Associations, visiting many in the United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, and Germany.

Upon his return McCormick again became corresponding secretary of the New York Association, in which position he served until the outbreak of the Civil War. He and one other delegate were the first members from the New York Association to attend an international convention. McCormick sat as a corresponding delegate at the Montreal Convention in 1856. Here he reported the work of the New York Association and was invited by the convention to give an address.

At the Troy Convention in 1859 McCormick, in spite of his friendship for Langdon, sided with those who wished the Association to enter upon the work of general evangelization.

# CHAPTER III

## THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

### SEC. 39.—EVENTS OF THE PERIOD

With the background we have studied in mind we must now consider the progress of events of this period.

The following chart of the administrations of the various Central Committees will give a bird's-eye view:

First Central Committee, Washington, 1854-1855.

Personnel—Wm. Chauncy Langdon, General Secretary; Wm. J. Rhees, Zalmon Richards.

Confederation established by the ratification of the Articles of Confederation by twenty-five Associations February 20, 1855. New York City was counted as one of these.

Second Convention, Cincinnati, September, 1855.

President, Wm. Chauncy Langdon.

Associations represented, 21; delegates, 52.

Second Central Committee, Cincinnati, 1855-1857.

Personnel—H. Thane Miller, Chairman; Wm. H. Neff, and Samuel Lowry, Jr.

*Quarterly Reporter* issued January, 1856.

Third Convention, Montreal, June, 1856.

President, Wm. H. Neff; delegate to European Associations, Wm. Chauncy Langdon.

Associations represented, 26; delegates, 87.

Fourth Convention, Richmond, May, 1857.  
President, Norton A. Halbert (Buffalo).  
Associations represented, 17; delegates, 51.  
The Great Revival, October, 1857.

Third Central Committee, Buffalo, 1858-1859.

Personnel—Oscar Cobb, Chairman; N. A. Halbert, Edmund A. Swan, Wm. M. Gray; Foreign Secretary, Wm. Chauncy Langdon (Philadelphia).

Fifth Convention, Charleston, April, 1858.  
President, Fred A. Sheldon, Troy.  
Associations represented, 24; delegates, 97.  
Student Associations founded at Universities of Michigan and Virginia.

Sixth Convention, Troy, July, 1859.  
President, George H. Stuart (Philadelphia).  
Controversy over the true aim and field of the Association and its relation to the Church.  
Associations represented, 72; delegates, 289.

Fourth Central Committee, Richmond, 1860.

Personnel—J. B. Watkins, Chairman; William P. Munford, Corresponding Secretary.

Seventh Convention, New Orleans, April, 1860.  
President, Wm. P. Munford.  
Physical training endorsed.  
Associations represented, 40; delegates, 128.

Fifth Central Committee, Philadelphia, 1861-1865.

Personnel—George H. Stuart, Chairman; John Wanamaker, Richard C. McCormick (New York), Corresponding Secretary.

Eighth Convention called for St. Louis; abandoned because of outbreak of Civil War.

## SEC. 40.—THE WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATION

June, 1854, to September, 1855

The great task of the First Central Committee was to carry out the mandate of the Buffalo Convention and put the Confederation on its feet.

The fear of disruption over the slavery issue and the fear of dictation and control by a central authority were the two great obstacles in the pathway of establishing an international confederation with an executive committee for supervision and promotion. These two issues were present in the minds of the leaders of every convention. They determined the appointment of officers and committeemen and the character of resolutions and convention programs. The statesmanship of Langdon was assiduously and adroitly devoted to avoiding these two rocks and to steering his little craft down the stream and out into an as yet uncharted sea.

Delegates returning from the Buffalo Convention secured the ratification at once of the Articles of Confederation by the Associations of Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Washington. The Washington Central Committee sent out its first circular within three weeks after the adjournment of the convention and before the end of July favorable action was taken by the Associations at Buffalo, Louisville, Toronto, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, and Quincy. Four others, including Philadelphia, accepted the Confederation during the summer, thirteen in all.

The establishment of the Confederation had been made dependent upon its acceptance by at least twenty-two local Associations. Those which had acted favorably had practically all been represented at the Buffalo Convention. Brooklyn declined to accept and an article appeared in the *Independent* condemning the idea of a Confederation. The Boston Asso-

ciation, although its delegate had withdrawn his opposition to the Confederation, voted not to enter the organization.

It was evident that some new effort was necessary unless the plan was to be abandoned. Langdon and Neff met in New York City in August and called on several leaders of that society with no apparent result. The report of the Buffalo Convention appeared in August but did not seem to advance the cause. McCartee of New York stated that the chief objection raised by that Association was against the term "Central" Committee on the ground that this implied control of the local Associations. He wrote "that a judicious friendly course on the part of the committee seconding the efforts of those in New York who favored the Confederation, might disarm those who seemed over-prudent in the matter."

Brooks of Toronto now wrote that that society would withdraw its approval unless Christian slaves were made eligible to membership in all local Associations. Langdon states ("Early Story of the Confederation," Year Book, 1888, p. 37):

"At this day it would be very difficult for anyone whose memory does not antedate the war of 1861-1865 to enter understandingly into the views and feelings inevitably involved on either side in such an issue.

"I instinctively felt that this was, perhaps, the true crisis of the Confederation. The causes which had obstructed the calling of a convention, even to consider the mutual relations of the Associations, and which made so many of them averse to recognize any formal relations at all, now presented themselves from different directions, and divested of all side issues.

"The Canadian and probably some of the Northern Associations were now unwilling that the Confedera-

tion should place them in what they regarded as a false position in respect to the religious consequences of slavery—for instance, Toronto and Providence.

“The Southern Associations, on the other hand, were equally sensitive of anything which would reflect on the Christian principle with which they conformed to the social and political conditions under which they were constituted and under which alone, of course, they could do their work. Some of these, therefore, were unwilling to expose themselves to having those principles called in question, as for instance, Baltimore and Charleston, and, indeed, the Association in New Orleans also, whose ratification was based on their confidence in those who had selected Mr. Helme to preside at the Buffalo Convention and who had suppressed the Holland resolution. Still again, the New York and very likely other Associations shrank from the Confederation as from an arena in which it would be impossible to escape harm and controversy from this cause.

“To decide either way, therefore, on the issue involved in the Toronto ratification, and brought before us by Mr. Brooks' letter, would be in all probability to shut out some important Associations on the one side or the other. To decide at all would, irrespective of the character of that decision, be an act equally unacceptable to those societies which were jealous of any authority which would trespass upon their autonomy.”

It was evident that the Central Committee must give a constructive statement of the significance and scope of the Articles of Confederation. Langdon states (“Early Story of the Confederation,” p. 38): “I met the issue simply by showing that the Buffalo resolutions did not provide for any other constitution than the general principles which they themselves set forth; and that the executive committee



was not a governing function authorized to assume any control but rather a creature of the confederated Associations for certain definite and limited purposes."

In order to formulate the committee's ideas, Circular No. 2 was issued on November 18, 1854. Some of its paragraphs are as follows: "Dear Brothers in Christ—The Central Committee have learned that there exists in many Young Men's Christian Associations a doubt regarding the character and extent of the functions and jurisdiction with which that body has been invested, which, interfering with a clear understanding of what they have been asked to ratify, has necessarily interfered with the ratification itself. This doubt the committee feel it is due equally to such Associations and themselves that they should remove by declaring their construction of their character."

"The committee is . . . not a ruling power but an agent through which a number of Associations may more effectually execute any project in which they may desire to unite; not their controller but their creature. . . .

"The proposed union is an alliance rather than a Confederation. . . . The bond is chiefly a spiritual one and the attraction which holds it together one of declared Christian sympathy, brotherhood, and love." Without mentioning the slavery issue the circular states, "Requests have come from a few sources that such and such a principle should be embodied in the constitution prepared for the Confederation, but the committee have not been authorized to frame a constitution and indeed they see no word in the proceedings of the Buffalo Convention which implied the expected existence of such an instrument."

The New York Association then accepted the Central Committee as a means of correspondence but did

not fully enter the Confederation. Charleston, S. C., San Francisco, and Montreal voted favorably during the winter months.

On February 20, 1855, Langdon was able to issue Circular No. 3 of the first Central Committee, announcing the establishment of the Confederation. There were twenty-five Associations listed as uniting in the project.

Toronto soon withdrew. Montreal was intermittent in its support. Boston, Brooklyn, and Baltimore refused to enter the alliance. New York, though its name was announced, never participated.

Buffalo, Washington, and Cincinnati and three strong Southern Associations, Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans, gave the real vitality to the movement for international union. Without the efforts of these six Associations the Confederation would have ceased to exist.

The Central Committee now devoted itself to welding the Associations together into a sympathetic fellowship. A system of correspondence was organized both with the American Associations and those of Europe. The North American Associations were grouped into seven districts with a corresponding member of the committee stationed in each. Some of the important leaders were induced to accept these positions, among them Robert McCartee of New York, Charles R. Brookes of Toronto, Zalmon Richards of Washington, William H. Neff of Cincinnati, and George W. Helme of New Orleans. Langdon was indefatigable in spreading information regarding the movement and in infusing his confidence that it was to become a great world-wide endeavor.

An invitation was received from Pastor J. Paul Cook, then president of the Paris Association, inviting the committee to send delegates to the first world's convention. George H. Stuart, president of

the Philadelphia Association, Rev. Abel Stevens, vice-president of the New York Association, and six other delegates were commissioned and attended this gathering.

One of Langdon's most valuable services was the extended report which he prepared and sent to the Paris Convention. This report gives a survey of the American Associations and the history of the founding of the Confederation. It was published in both the Paris and American Convention reports.

One of the important duties of the first Central Committee was to call the second convention of the American Associations. It was decided to invite all the Associations to send delegates, whether members of the Confederation or not. Four Associations competed for the privilege of entertaining this convention, Montreal, Cincinnati, Charleston, and New Orleans. Circular No. 4 asks for a vote upon these invitations and the replies showed a decided majority for Cincinnati. This invitation was accordingly accepted.

Langdon was persistent in urging the claims of the Confederation upon Associations which neglected or refused to ratify its articles. In Circular No. 5, inviting Associations to send delegates, he explains with great care the relations of the convention as well as of the Central Committee to the local Associations. He states: "Since much misunderstanding concerning the character of these conventions and the function of their members has been manifest it appears proper to the committee at this time to state the views held by a majority of the confederated Associations as well as by themselves. . . . It appears scarcely possible to make it plainer than it is, that the Confederated existence is intended *in no way, at no time, under no circumstances*, and *in no relation* whether as a convention or a Central Committee to

advance upon the local character of *any Association*; much less can it be contemplated that one society should *anywhere* in convention or out have the power of interference with either the acts or the attitude of any other."\*

This later influenced Langdon's attitude as to whether the International convention should seek to determine the conditions of membership in a local Association by insisting on the evangelical basis. He regarded such interference as an invasion of local autonomy.

Even a more tactful and more persistent man than Langdon could hardly have expected to urge an international union such as he proposed without arousing public opposition and personal antagonisms. Some opposed the Confederation from objections to its principles and some from the belief that Langdon was seeking either reputation or a salaried position for himself. Accordingly Langdon determined to resign from further participation in Association affairs and he also became convinced that it would promote the stability of the Central Committee to have its headquarters transferred to another city. His own story of this transfer is full of interest.

He says ("Early Story of the Confederation," p. 43):

"My motives in all that I had so far done and tried to do, had been severely characterized in certain so-

\* The inter-Association polity has continued to recognize individualism rather than collectivism, even to the extent of imposing severe handicap upon the general progress of the organization. Lack of cohesion, inability to function collectively, the absence of a national voice, the lack of support for great causes of human progress, characterize the Association movement with some exceptions to this day, but it has on the other hand preserved all of the advantages of individualism in the local units, chief amongst which are the belief that independency is more likely to develop local leadership, invention and perhaps genius, and that economy is said to be promoted by the necessity of individual survival.—R. E. L.

cieties—especially in those of New York and New Orleans. However decided in his dissent from my policy, Professor Crosby had, of course, ever given expression to that dissent with entire Christian courtesy. But by others it had been publicly charged at the very meeting at which the New York society had ratified the Buffalo resolutions and since that there was little real object in the scheme but my own personal aim to open an arena for my own ambition, and this judgment accepted by some Southerners then present, was afterwards brought up against the plan and against me in New Orleans.

“To Mr. Helme . . . I therefore wrote: ‘I have thought my continuance in my position as general secretary was perhaps positively detrimental to our dear cause and that the removal of the Central Committee from Washington and that the appointment of someone else as general secretary would free the Confederation from many most disagreeable and serious drawbacks upon its unanimity and strength.

“‘Indeed I desire to serve the cause I have taken in hand, indeed, my dear brother, this is my only wish. If it is well I will labor while I can stand the weight. If it is best let me withdraw from the active labor; still praying for it; most deeply regretting I have done so little but with all the heart to have done much more.’”

This was a case of real renunciation, for Langdon had deep instincts of loyalty and devotion to any cause he espoused, as his whole life service showed. One cannot avoid the speculation as to what would have been the development of the Association movement if Langdon could at this period have devoted twenty-five years of his constructive genius to its service, as was later done by Cephas Brainerd.

Langdon states he had not then learned “that such harsh misjudgments and personal attacks are the al-

most inevitable cost of a sincerely earnest attempt to accomplish any public result however good it may be in itself, if it be at the time unpopular or unappreciated by those who oppose it." Langdon's friends and many of those concerned for the Confederation were opposed to his resigning. The Cincinnati Association made him an honorary member. Neff and Helme urged him to reconsider his purpose. Lowry of Cincinnati wrote: "I could not but consider it fatal to the union of our Associations. No one has so clear an idea of the object to be gained by such a union, no one connected with it is so well qualified to bring it into effective operation as yourself."

McCormick of New York also urged Langdon not to withdraw. He wrote, "Your great intimacy with the Associations of this country, your wide correspondence with those of other lands, and your industrious and warm Christian spirit combine to make you eminently fitted for the important positions which you have held in connection with the Confederation from the day of its organization and which I sincerely trust you will by no means abandon."

Neff visited Langdon and persuaded him to remain as general secretary until after the coming convention. This he consented to do on condition the headquarters would then be transferred elsewhere.

The last service of the Washington Central Committee was to arrange and promote the second convention of the Associations. This was held at Cincinnati in September, 1855. It was a test of the vitality of the movement whether the Associations would continue to assemble in conventions, whether the general administration could be established in a new center, and whether a committee of laymen could be found sufficiently acquainted with the organization and devoted to its objects wisely and efficiently to direct its affairs.

The conventions of this period drew only a limited number of delegates from a distance and were consequently more sectional in character than in these days of rapid transportation. There was no delegate present at Cincinnati from New England, New York City, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, or Baltimore. As Langdon states, it was largely "a western affair." There were fifty-two delegates from twenty-one Associations in attendance.

The convention as a challenge to his critics and a recognition of his devoted services elected Langdon president. Referring to his personal services Langdon states: "It was undoubtedly a kind and brotherly acceptance of my work . . . but it was due also to the personal strictures to which I had been subjected that I was chosen to preside over this convention. It was the warm and even indignant ratification of my official course and an expression of personal regard and confidence."

Langdon was the dominant spirit at this convention as he had been at the Buffalo Convention and during the administration of the first Central Committee. This is seen in a significant incident. In connection with a resolution on the true aim of the Association James Eells of Cleveland introduced two resolutions. The second of these was as follows (Cincinnati Convention Report, 1856, p. 55): "Resolved that . . . this convention recognizes those only as active members of these Associations who are members of evangelical churches." The president (Langdon) ruled as follows: "The chair finds itself placed in a disagreeable position but is compelled to recognize the necessity of pronouncing the second resolution out of order because in violation of the Buffalo resolutions of Confederation which expressly deny to the convention the right of legislating with reference to the local affairs of any Association."

H. Thane Miller appealed from the decision of the chair. Neff, the ablest leader of the Confederation next to Langdon, supported Langdon's decision. He said, "Should the convention pass such a resolution *legislating* on the subject of membership they might with equal propriety lay out work for the local Associations, directing the establishment of Sabbath schools, the invitation of lecturers, etc., and then interfering in all the affairs of the Association."

The appeal was withdrawn and the convention accepted Langdon's ruling. The resolution was changed to a recommendation. This act of Langdon saved the infant organization from the difficulties which followed the reversal of this decision thirteen years later by the convention at Portland which fixed the evangelical test upon the American Association, invaded local autonomy, and introduced theological disputes into the Association movement. Langdon's decision was prompted wholly by his conception of the polity of the Association, as he sympathized with restricting the control of local Associations to members of evangelical churches.

Langdon presented both the report of the Central Committee and the document covering twenty pages which he had prepared on the American movement for the Paris Convention. These two reports, the five circulars issued by the Washington Central Committee, and the journal of the Buffalo Convention, all prepared or edited by Langdon, may be said to have formulated the polity of the American Associations in their international affairs. It was a voluntary democratic organization made up of locally independent units united by a spiritual bond under the guidance of an advisory committee which received its instructions from a convention of delegates from local Associations.

The Cincinnati Convention was marked by three



features: (1) the approval of the Paris Basis, (2) the discussion of the true sphere of the Associations, (3) the establishment of the *Quarterly Reporter*.

Neff read (Cincinnati Convention Report, 1855, pp. 45-46) a letter of greeting from the first world's convention which had been held the preceding month at Paris. This letter describes the organized system of correspondence proposed among the Associations of the world and presented the declaration of purpose and belief known as the Paris Basis. On a motion made by Neff this was ratified. The motion stated that the convention "approve and hereby ratify the resolutions of the Confederation and correspondence submitted by the conference of Christian Associations lately assembled at Paris." The committee was authorized to put these into effect. A reservation, however, provided that any local Association would have the privilege of withdrawing should it desire to do so. The Paris Basis emphasized the unity of the Association movement, the independence of the local society, and the object of the Association as the extension of Christ's Kingdom among young men.

Its doctrinal statement was strongly and conservatively evangelical. This was the position of George Williams, of Langdon, and practically all of the Association leaders of the period.

Preceding the reading of the letter from Paris Langdon had read his extended survey of the American Associations. Referring to difficulties with Unitarians he said (Cincinnati Report, 1856, p. 92): "In Springfield, Mass., the contest with a denomination of professing Christians who were not content that good should be done unless they might share equally in its accomplishment, had sapped the energies of the society and filled it with discouragement and the efforts of this body to ratify the proceedings of the Buffalo Convention only gave them proof that the

struggle was in vain; and upon their closed doors is written a memorial of the 'liberality' and 'charity' of those Christians who use these words for their battle-cries in this most unchristian warfare. For months nothing has been heard from the Association at Worcester, its trials were the same, it is feared that its fate has been that of Springfield."

Langdon had thought deeply on the true purpose of the Association. He saw that unless the local Associations understood clearly the purpose for which they were organized they would ultimately fail. Accordingly on the second day of the convention (Cincinnati Convention Report, 1855, p. 49) he proposed the following resolution: "Whereas both the local and general efficiency of any organization is increased or diminished in proportion as its character and purposes are more or less clearly defined and whereas great uncertainty has existed and has been manifested on the above points in many localities where Young Men's Christian Associations were being or were about to be organized—Resolved, that in the opinion of this convention, a Young Men's Christian Association is a society which has for its object the formation and development in young men of Christian character and Christian activity. Resolved further that this convention regards it as important to the efficiency and influence of these Associations that their energies should be, as far as judicious, concentrated upon the immediate field above set forth."

Langdon stated that letters were written him repeatedly asking to know the design of the Associations and that there was "great danger of going off on purposes entirely exterior and in directions (as might be seen from some of these reports) which had not been dreamed of by any society organized."

Rev. James Eells of Cleveland took this occasion to advocate a resolution insisting on the requirement

of the evangelical basis for active membership. He opposed allowing local Associations to determine for themselves the basis of membership. He said, "Shall we say we are an Association of moral young men in some parts of the country and in other parts, of young men connected with the evangelical churches, yet all coming together and calling themselves by the general name of 'A Christian Association'?"

The questions of the aim of the Association and the basis of membership were referred to a special committee of which Eells was appointed chairman. He reported the resolution requiring membership in an evangelical church of active members but was obliged to change this to a recommendation. It was unfortunate that he eliminated the part of the resolution urging the Associations to limit their field of activity to young men.

The resolution adopted stated that the object of the Association was "the formation and development in young men of Christian character and Christian activity." This resolution was ambiguous, for the term "Christian activity" was capable of different interpretations and at the Troy Convention three years later Eells and Langdon strongly disagreed as to its meaning. It should be borne in mind that Langdon proposed this resolution in connection with another which Eells eliminated, emphasizing that the distinctive field of the Association was among young men. The divergent tendencies in the American movement were already apparent.

The third step taken by the convention was the establishment of a periodical known as the *Quarterly Reporter* for the purpose of affording a means of communication between the Central Committee and the local Associations. In 1859 the *Quarterly* was changed to a monthly under the name of *Young Men's Christian Journal*.

On motion of the business committee Cincinnati was chosen as headquarters for the Confederation. A Central Committee was appointed of thirteen members, five at headquarters and one from each of the seven different districts into which the continent was divided. Langdon was chosen as an additional member from the Washington district but insisted on withdrawing. The second Central Committee as finally constituted consisted of H. Thane Miller, chairman; Wm. H. Neff, home secretary; members, A. C. Neave, George Williams, and Samuel Lowry. Rhees of Washington was made foreign secretary.

One of the pleasing features of the convention was the presence of Rev. Wm. Arthur, one of the vice-presidents of the parent Association of London, who delivered to the convention an address which was most cordially received.

The Cincinnati Convention, with the transfer of the Central Committee to new headquarters, may be said to have completed the establishment of the Confederation, the most important step next to the founding of the first Association which had yet been taken. Robert McBurney, writing in 1885 (*Year Book, 1884*, p. 35), said, "Humanly speaking had it not been for this organization (now the International Committee) resulting from the efforts of Mr. Langdon, the historian even now would probably be compelled to say of the American Associations . . . simply that they have ceased to exist."

McBurney further states: "Langdon providentially proved equal to the work he had set his heart upon. He conducted the delicate negotiations with indomitable energy, enthusiasm, tact, and loving devotion and finally triumphed. . . . The Associations in our own land and in all lands owe a debt of gratitude to Doctor Langdon, deeper and more far-reaching than they have ever recognized."

## CHAPTER IV

### LATER ADMINISTRATIONS

#### SEC. 41.—THE SECOND CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Cincinnati, September, 1855, to May, 1857

This committee had a difficult task, as Neff and Lowry were the only two members who had been in touch with Confederation affairs from the beginning and none of the other members attended the two conventions held during its administration. Neff was present at the Montreal Convention, over which he presided, and Lowry represented the committee at the Richmond Convention.

Some of the difficulties of this period are illustrated by the fact that although the Montreal Association entertained the convention of 1856 the following year that Association withdrew because the Confederation would not adopt an anti-slavery resolution. (Richmond Convention Report, 1857, p. 32.)

The Cincinnati Central Committee made a distinct contribution in successfully inaugurating the *Quarterly Reporter*. Seven numbers of this journal were issued by this committee and circulated among the Associations both at home and abroad. It was devoted to concrete reports of actual work done by local Associations, to correspondence with foreign Associations, communications from the Central Committee, and from members who wished to discuss any Association topic. It might be regarded as a continuation of the annual convention in promoting knowledge and interest in Association affairs.

When the third convention assembled at Montreal in June, 1856, a most apprehensive state of mind existed on both sides of the national boundary lest the political crisis might bring the two countries into armed conflict. The Crimean War was at its height. Recruiting agents claiming to have authority from the British minister were active in a number of cities in the United States. Secretary of State Marcy protested vigorously, but Lord Clarendon refused to admit any complicity on the part of his representative. The evidence was slight but in May President Pierce broke off diplomatic relations with Great Britain and these were not reestablished during the rest of his term of office, which continued until March of the following year. This situation gave a tense atmosphere to the Montreal Convention.

Thomas H. Gladstone, president of the Borough Branch, London, and one of the leaders of the British Associations, was warmly welcomed and gave one of the principal addresses. The Convention voted in a spirit of international fellowship to send a delegation, of whom Langdon was the chief member, to visit the Associations in Europe. At the first session Langdon asked if a resolution on the relations between England and the United States was in order. This was referred to a special committee. The committee reported (Montreal Convention Report, 1856, p. 37) that while it would not be fitting to discuss purely political questions "We feel it our duty to recommend to our brethren of Britain and America, in the present unsettled relations between the countries, the exercise of a cool and dispassionate judgment, a calm and temperate treatment of all political issues between the nations and united prayer to God that He will so direct cabinets and temper the tide of popular sympathy as to insure peace and advance the Kingdom of Christ among men." The resolution then pro-

posed to the Associations of North America the first Tuesday in August as a day of special prayer for peace. These resolutions were unanimously adopted.

While the reports of Associations were being submitted an interesting interchange of sentiment took place. The delegate from Kingston (Canada) after reporting for his Association said: "I cannot sit down without giving utterance to the painful emotions which the very possibility of war between the two great nations represented in this convention gives rise to in my mind. I know that I speak the sentiments of my own Association and I believe of every Christian young man in these provinces when I hail your presence among us, brethren of the United States, with gladness and when I give you our most cordial welcome. We feel bound to you, brethren, by the strongest ties of Christian affection . . . and we of Canada cheerfully pledge ourselves to devote our energies, our influence, and our prayers to the removal of everything which threatens to sever these Christian bonds."

Several American delegates responded most heartily to these sentiments. Langdon exclaimed, "We stand here the children of one language, one history, one faith, one ancestry, to acknowledge our common allegiance and to proclaim our loyalty to the Great Lord of Rulers and King of Kings."

Commerce and political interests have done much to unite the world and develop a world consciousness but international organizations for religious and social service like the Red Cross and the Young Men's Christian Associations have been among the most potent factors in creating a spirit of world brotherhood and solidarity.

The Montreal Convention surpassed its two predecessors in size and enthusiasm. Eighty-seven delegates were present from twenty-six Associations and

for the first time nonconfederated Associations were represented by corresponding delegates. Eight were present from Boston, including Moses W. Pond, and two from New York City, one of whom was Richard C. McCormick. William H. Neff, corresponding secretary of the Central Committee, was elected president of the convention. George H. Stuart of Philadelphia, a delegate for the first time, was chosen one of the vice-presidents. Langdon and Rhees participated actively in the convention proceedings.

The most interesting incident of the convention was the introduction by Rhees of three resolutions, one on physical training and two on amusements. It is significant that these propositions were presented together and by the same liberal-minded man. They were intimately related to the new ideal in religious education and social service which the Young Men's Christian Association was destined to embody. They were an instinctive recognition that the awakening of interest on the part of young men must take the place of external authority, that the democratic spirit rather than the autocratic must dominate Christian effort.

These two questions were to influence profoundly not only the Young Men's Christian Association but all religious life and thought. For thirty years the Young Men's Christian Association was to be the battleground between the puritan ascetic ideal and the social and democratic ideal of religious life and effort.

Both physical training and amusements were developed because the Association was seeking to serve young men in their leisure time. It was not from any philosophic theory of their character value that these were promoted, but by the tedious method of trial and error and the law of the survival of the fittest they came into universal acceptance. The Associa-



tions which used these agencies survived and were helpful to young men. The others except among students disappeared. Guided recreation, play, and physical education were found to contribute to the development of personality and to stable Christian character. A wholesome attractive environment drew young men irresistibly from lives of indulgence and sin.

The resolutions proposed by Rhees were (Montreal Convention Report, 1856, pp. 15, 67): "1. Whether any means can be provided by Young Men's Christian Associations for the physical development and promotion of the health of their members by gymnasiums, baths, etc. 2. The practical influence of theaters and similar places of amusement on young men. 3. The best means of rendering the rooms of the Association attractive to worldly young men."

The resolutions on the gymnasium and amusements were laid on the table.

The resolution adopted for attracting "worldly young men" was as follows: "That among the most important means are rooms central in their location and cheerfully and tastefully furnished, libraries and reading rooms, debates, socials, lectures, and Bible classes." Most of these agencies were remote from the dominant interest of "worldly young men," who would have been far more interested in physical training and athletic games.

The two resolutions laid on the table are of such great significance that they are quoted in part. The first was regarding physical training prepared by George A. Bell of Brooklyn:

"Vital piety and earnest practical godliness are intimately connected with a healthy physical system. . . . Associations should make arrangements for the physical improvement and the development of their members. . . . Especially is this necessary . . . in

our large cities. . . . The establishment of some such means . . . would doubtless induce many young men whose hearts have not been given to Christ to join the Associations and thus they would be brought under the influence of the members and led perhaps to the prayer meeting and finally to the foot of the cross.

"That when properly conducted, gymnasiums, baths, and bowling alleys are beneficial to bodily health and physical vigor.

"That public sentiment in many of our cities in regard to bowling alleys renders it inexpedient for this convention to recommend their establishment.

"That we look upon billiards as detrimental to health and morals.

"That this convention approves of every proper means . . . for interesting and improving the young men of our cities and of thus drawing under good and Christian influences those whose hearts have not yet been given to the Saviour.

"That . . . the convention would respectfully recommend to the Associations . . . the establishment of gymnasiums and baths to be as far as possible self-supporting."

The resolution on amusement was presented by R. Terhune of Newark, New Jersey. After speaking of the evil influence of the theater as then conducted for commercial gain and of horse racing and the circus as prone to "excite the imagination and influence the baser passions of men," it was

"Resolved, that these kinds of amusements can be best counteracted by furnishing . . . such recreations as are moderately and healthfully stimulating, such as social reunions, healthful games, concerts of music, festivals, etc., and everything which can be devised as attractive for good."

This and the resolution on physical training failed

of adoption, but their advocates gained ground and were determined to urge a sane wholesome life for young men. The traditional attitude of a church nurtured in puritan ideals regarding dancing, cards, billiards, the drama, bowling, the use of Sunday, and even the reading of fiction presented a thorny path before any organization which wished to sanctify the recreations and leisure time of young men.\*

The Young Men's Christian Association has been strikingly conservative in its theology, but it has been astonishingly radical in its methods in pioneering the use of recreation and physical training as a means of building character. It has led the Church to adopt the policy of direction rather than repression of the play instinct. When games such as checkers and chess were first introduced in the New York City Association as late as 1869 McBurney reported them as furniture in order to avoid opposition and for the same reason the classes in gymnastics were listed unobtrusively with the classes in French and English.

It is not surprising that at the convention at Richmond in 1857 that the Cincinnati Committee in its reports states (Richmond Convention Report, 1857, p. 41), "This Committee believe that the spiritual benefit first of the members themselves and secondly of those around them should be the one great object of the Associations and further that the means tending

\* These radicals of yesterday look almost like conservatives today; that is the lot of the radicals, but they are remembered because they were. They would be forgotten otherwise. Those that determine the course of history must seem to be radical; that is what makes them stand forth, and in the twentieth century the men who are attempting to liberalize the Association must expect to be treated with suspicion by the predominant conservatives until the new generation finally rallies to their support and the new age has its way. So only is social progress made. "Advanced men" who are suspected, and are treated with contumely or at least receive the hot opposition of the average man, ultimately are to be accredited with the term "leadership," and is it not the only way leadership may be secured?—R. E. L.

directly to this end such as the Bible class, the devotional meeting, the Sabbath School, and other Christian labors should receive attention in preference to the library, reading room, and miscellaneous lectures which can only be considered as leading to it incidentally and are usually attended with heavy expenses."

Unknowingly, the Associations were rapidly approaching a religious upheaval which, with the Civil War, was destined to postpone for a number of years progress in the evolution of the program for developing all-round manhood in body, mind, and spirit.

The Richmond Convention assembled in May, 1857; the attendance was small. Langdon was in Europe. Samuel Lowry was the only member of the Central Committee present. Rhees and Richards of Washington were the only other representatives of the pioneer group. Writing some years later of this convention Lowry said: "There is usually a period in the progress of any movement . . . when the force of the original impulse seems to be nearly exhausted and about to become inert . . . a position similar to that of heavy machinery when it is described as being on a dead center. . . . It was during such a season of comparative inaction that the Richmond Convention was held. It was an important meeting . . . successful in its influence in turning the ebbing tide and in infusing fresh energy into the work."

#### SEC. 42.—THIRD CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Headquarters, Buffalo, 1857-1859

The Richmond Convention voted to transfer the headquarters of the Central Committee from Cincinnati to Buffalo. The third Central Committee accordingly began its administration in the summer of 1857 with Oscar Cobb as chairman, Wm. M. Gray as home

secretary, N. A. Halbert as editor of the *Quarterly Reporter*, and Samuel Lowry of Cincinnati as foreign secretary.

Some of the most remarkable experiences in the history of the American movement occurred under the administration of the Buffalo Committee. These were the great religious awakening and the important convention at Troy in 1859. Both of these tended to divert the Association from its primary field of endeavor.

Reference has already been made to the financial panic which overtook New York and the business interests of the entire country in October, 1857. A far-reaching revival followed immediately on its heels. This revival has had a profound influence on all the later history of the North American Associations. Other revivals are associated with the names of great evangelists, Moody, Charles G. Finney, Wesley, Edwards, Whitefield. This revival was the work of laymen.

Preaching has been a prominent feature of other religious awakenings. This one was characterized by prayer meetings.

The great evangelists represented different denominations. The unique feature of this revival was that it was everywhere a union interdenominational movement.

The characteristics of the awakening were leadership by laymen, prayer meetings, and interdenominational fellowship.

These three dynamic factors begot a fervid enthusiasm that made this religious revival one of the most far-reaching of any in American history. ("Life of Robert R. McBurney," pp. 42-46): "Early in the year 1856, several members of the New York Association, among them L. L. Deane, became convinced that some means should be adopted by which to reach the

150,000 young men residing in the heart of the metropolis. This conviction was strengthened by the report of Richard C. McCormick relating to the operation of kindred Associations in Great Britain and other parts of Europe.

"In August, after a vain effort to secure the John Street Methodist Church, application was made by Deane for the use of the consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church on Fulton Street, for the purpose of carrying on union prayer meetings chiefly for men. The use of the rooms was granted on any evening not required for meetings of the church, and a weekly meeting was commenced. The first noon prayer meeting was held in September, 1856. The meeting was held daily for a time, and then three times a week, between 12 and 1 o'clock. This continued until the summer of 1857, when it was deemed best, owing to the absence of many from the city, to suspend it for a time.

"These meetings were upon a purely union basis. The invitation was, 'Come and go as you like, and stay no longer than suits your convenience.' A number of gentlemen from the Young Men's Christian Association cooperated with Deane, among them Robert R. McBurney and Edward Colgate. This is McBurney's first recorded service in connection with the Association.

"In order to gather young men to these meetings, printed cards of invitation were distributed copiously in houses of business. Later in the summer, under the leadership of Colgate, a number of the members of the Association were making arrangements for reopening the noon meeting.

"While the committee was in session in a store in the neighborhood of Fulton Street, J. C. Lamphier, who, in the meantime, on July first, had been appointed city missionary by the consistory of the

Dutch Reformed Church, called and said he had already taken some steps toward reopening the meeting. He urged the young men to leave it in his care, and asked them to take hold with him and help sustain it rather than have two meetings. The young men approved of this proposition, provided the exercises be sustained on a thoroughly union basis. They went to work with Lamphier and cooperated heartily.

"In the meantime the financial depression which was sweeping over the whole country was approaching a crisis. The most serious financial panic which New York or the country at large has ever experienced came in October, 1857. It was so overwhelming that it prostrated the monetary system of the country. This panic turned the attention of thousands of business men to the consideration of other than worldly matters, and was followed by a marvelous religious awakening which stirred the entire nation.

"Immediately the prayer meeting at the Dutch Reformed Church became crowded. Soon three meetings were being held simultaneously in different parts of the consistory building. Members of the Young Men's Christian Association were active in these meetings. The crowds became so large 'it was clearly seen that the Association had only just entered upon its work and in February a committee was appointed to organize and sustain free of expense to the Association union prayer meetings in such sections of the city as the necessities of the case and the signs of the time seemed to demand.' Meetings were started by the Association in the John Street Methodist Church, in the Ninth Street Dutch Reformed Church, in the Dutch Reformed Church at Broome and Greene Streets, in Burton's old theater, and in the Central Presbyterian Church. 'A circular letter was prepared expressly for the clergy, setting forth

the object of the Association and giving an account of the union prayer meetings held in the city.' Other agencies besides the Young Men's Christian Associations rallied to this movement, until in New York City alone one hundred and fifty noon prayer meetings were being carried on simultaneously.

"The report sent by the American Central Committee to the World's Conference, held at Geneva, July, 1858, says: 'Union prayer meetings are maintained or have been in all our large places. By the union meetings large churches, or even deserted theaters, have been crowded. In them sectarianism is lost. It has been perceived that the principle and practice of cordial union among Christians of different persuasions, not for ecclesiastical purposes but for the cultivation of personal holiness and the conversion of men, is the primary force which has sustained and advanced this awakening. Where did the principle and practice originate and find embodiment? Was it not in the Young Men's Christian Association? These Associations have steadily advanced and increased in numbers. All this had been going on for years, and the great principle of religious activity upon a union basis had become a practical fact. Hence the agency for the great work was at hand. As the revival proceeded upon a union basis, our Associations were ready at the outset without any adjustment of machinery for the work. The union field was emphatically their field. In many places, as in New York, Baltimore, and Louisville, our Associations were the first to hold union meetings, the example of which was soon followed by the churches.'"

The report of the New York Association for 1862 says: "The noon-day union prayer meetings in Fulton Street, now in successful operation, will so long as it continues, or the memory of it remains, be a monument and a proof of the good our Association



has accomplished. The young men composing the committee which planted the seeds and watched the young life of that now renowned and blessed meeting are still numbered among our most earnest members."

The revival spread throughout the entire nation and was even carried to the northern counties of Ireland. Wherever Young Men's Christian Associations existed, these Associations by common consent took the initiative in inaugurating noon prayer meetings of a union character carried on largely by laymen.

In April, 1858, Jesse Clement, district member of the Central Committee, Dubuque, Iowa, wrote (Charleston Convention Report, 1858, p. 29): "You will rejoice to know that the blessed work of grace which is sweeping over the country like a wind-driven prairie fire is in this part of the land greatly enlarging the number of young men who will hereafter be found fighting on the side of truth. Of four hundred recent converts in the city of Dubuque about one fourth are young men." At St. Paul four daily prayer meetings were conducted by the Association which were largely attended. Three of these meetings were in fire engine houses.

Louisville, Kentucky, reported a very deep interest in similar meetings in that city. A commercial traveler reported that one could travel from New York City to Omaha and find a daily union prayer meeting in progress in every town of any importance.

In Philadelphia in May, 1858, a large tent was erected and daily evangelistic services conducted during the entire summer. This example was followed by the Cincinnati Association, which established a "Union Tabernacle" which became widely known. The Lay Delegation Movement began in Cincinnati. By this team method a group of business men would visit a community, conduct a number of evangelistic

services, and urge the Christian men of the town to organize similar lay delegations for tours of the smaller communities in their neighborhoods. By this organized effort the population of entire states was influenced.

One result of the revival was the formation of many new Associations. New England had refrained because of abolition sentiment from supporting the Confederation. It was reported in 1858 that the number of Associations in New England had increased from eight to eighteen. In New York State and Pennsylvania thirteen new Associations were organized during the year. The Central Committee report for 1859 showed (Troy Convention Report, 1859, p. 134) "that out of 182 Associations then in existence 98 or 54 per cent had been organized within that year." It was impossible to assimilate so large a proportion of new organizations to the old ideals. These Associations became lay organizations for general evangelistic and missionary endeavor, with work for young men as an incidental feature. All the patient efforts of Langdon, Rhees, Lowry, Neff, and McCormick to inaugurate a specialized society for the building of Christian character among young men seemed overwhelmed in the new enthusiasm.

Eells of Cleveland, Miller of Cincinnati, Stuart of Philadelphia, and others transformed the Association into a glowing general evangelistic agency for "the propagation of the Gospel" in rural and urban communities alike.

In recent years leaders of institutional churches have announced that the work of the Young Men's Christian Association was ended and the short-lived Inter-Church World Movement was pointed out as rendering the Young Men's Christian Association unnecessary, but in 1858 and 1859 men were outspoken in announcing that the denominational church be-

cause of its divisions had failed to save the world and a new union agency, the Young Men's Christian Association, had been raised up of God to take its place. Clergymen heard ardent laymen proclaim a new institution which would supersede the Church.

Many forms of religious and philanthropic work were being carried on widely by the Young Men's Christian Association. From the very first convention in 1854 mission Sunday schools and city missions were promoted; later Bible and tract distribution flourished. Almshouses and charitable institutions were visited for the purpose of conducting religious meetings and cheering the sick. During the yellow fever scourge in New Orleans a most heroic service was rendered in which the vice-president of the Association laid down his life. The Montreal Association employed a city missionary, while another Association reported a sewing school for little girls.

With such diversity in its program, with the doubling of the number of Associations in a single year, it is not surprising that the American movement was carried off its feet, its original aim obscured, and its efforts directed to the general revival work which at the time absorbed the entire Church. The Kingston, Ontario, Association reported apologetically: "The ground of the Bible Society was occupied, also that of the tract society and the city missionary and the Sunday school instruction. We contented ourselves, therefore, with the improvement of young men." (Cincinnati Report, 1855, p. 13.)

The Buffalo Association, while commending these various forms of effort as necessary to develop the religious life and activity, reports that their main objective and original purpose was the religious welfare of young men. The clearest conception of the Association's mission is found in the work of the New York City Association which kept itself aloof from

the general Association movement. This society (Cincinnati Convention Report, 1855, p. 20) encouraged its members to engage in all helpful effort under other appropriate auspices but confined the work of the organization itself "to the moral and spiritual improvement of young men."

Langdon was absent in Europe during the early months of 1857. His conviction had been steadily growing, that the Association was a specialized agency of the Church limited to its very important field of work for young men by young men. He returned home with this conviction clarified and strengthened by contact with the Associations abroad. He found the attitude of the American Associations rapidly changing under the heat of the revival. He set himself with all his ardent nature to stem the tide. The Association seemed to be deserting him like a wayward son leaving an anxious father.

Upon his return from Europe, Langdon was appointed foreign secretary of the Central Committee. He was present at the Charleston Convention in 1858 as a recently ordained Episcopal clergyman. Langdon's attitude becomes undoubtedly more ecclesiastical from this time on. Shortly afterwards he removed to Philadelphia to begin his ministry. He sought in vain to influence the Association to confine its work to young men only and leave to the Church the task of preaching to the masses.

In the January issue of the *Young Men's Christian Journal*, 1859 (p. 11), Langdon in an article on the London Association said: "In the United States the great revival . . . has been the occasion of subjecting cool heads to warm hearts to such an extent that some of the best and oldest friends of the institution among the clergy of more than one denomination have been compelled to expose themselves to the charge of unfaithfulness and decreasing affection by

lifting up a warning voice. There is danger before us in America and danger, too, the more to be feared that it comes to us in the noblest and holiest impulses. The Bible Society, the Tract Society, and the American Sunday School Union, those great societies which have so long and so harmoniously united Christians of various communions, have done so because they have a clearly defined object and sphere to which they are limited and in which all can labor because they are thus preserved clear in their joint action from all contact with denominational principles. . . . The Young Men's Christian Association is *not* an institution for the general promulgation of the Gospel, but an institution to fit young men to be, 'in the sphere of their daily calling,' efficient supports and members of the institution which was divinely appointed for that work."

Rev. Alfred Taylor of Philadelphia replied vigorously in the February *Journal*, stating the position of the leaders who favored using the Association for general religious effort. He quoted Langdon and then stated the generally accepted view. (The *Young Men's Christian Journal*, February, 1859, pp. 28-29.) "The Young Men's Christian Association is *not* an institution for the general promulgation of the Gospel.' I had always thought it was. I have looked on it as an agency, and a very direct agency, for the evangelization of those who have never yet been reached by the Gospel, and I think that a large majority of the Christians who have been connected with it have so considered it. . . . There is work enough to keep both ministers and laymen employed. . . . Fearful and ultra-conservative friends may raise their warning voice in alarm lest the Church should be overwhelmed, let us press on assured that it will not be."

This controversy which was to last for over twenty years was in full swing; there were three groups.

First, those whose absorbing interest was in any form of evangelistic work. Second, those who wished to carry on evangelistic work for young men, minimizing the so-called secular agencies, and a third group who wished to serve young men in an all-round manner, making evangelistic effort a fitting part of the program.

Another group arose chiefly outside the Association, who began to criticise the movement as usurping the work of the Church. Underlying all of this discussion was the problem of allowing the growing religious interest of laymen to express itself wisely and efficiently. There has always been an indiscriminating type of layman who plunges crudely into any form of effort provided it is labeled religious and there has always been the narrow high-church type of clergyman who cannot discriminate between the ministry and the Church and who discounts any religious effort which is not done under denominational auspices and under ministerial control.

Langdon recognized this situation and sought to harmonize these conflicting factions, but he was unable to do so. The new recruits to the Association cause repudiated his leadership and it must be said for the most part could not comprehend his position. Langdon himself, having now given his life to the ministry, was inclined to be less cordial than formerly to any endeavor not carried on under Church auspices.

#### SEC. 43.—A REPUDIATED LEADER

The Troy Convention of 1859 was the "climax of the Confederation period." The chief issues were the scope and aim of the Young Men's Christian Association and the relation of the Association to the Church. Langdon had been asked to address the convention and he took this occasion to urge his convic-

tion before a body almost unanimously opposed to him. He says ("Early Story of the Confederation," Year Book, 1888): "I had already resigned my ministerial position in Philadelphia. I was soon to go abroad for an absence of an indefinite duration. It was possibly the last time I should be able to meet my brethren in consultation upon such interest. . . . I resolved to make an attempt at least to arrest this then widely spreading impulse which seemed to me to be utterly running away with our enthusiasm, dissipating our energies, distracting our counsels, nay, alienating the ministry and the older and more weighty lay Christians of the Church and thus jeopardizing the power and future influence of the Association."

There were 289 delegates at Troy from seventy-two Associations. There were more delegates present than at the five preceding conventions combined. Philadelphia was represented by nineteen members, who took the leading part in this convention. Its chief delegates were George H. Stuart, John Wanamaker, Rev. George S. Fox, and Rev. Alfred Taylor. Langdon, though recognized as a delegate because of his position as foreign secretary, had no credentials from the Philadelphia Association.

New York City for the first time sent regularly appointed delegates. They, however, took only a subordinate part in the convention. Cephas Brainerd was present for the first time at an international convention. New England sent fifty-four delegates from seventeen Associations. H. Thane Miller was present from Cincinnati; Munford and Watkins from Richmond; Richards and Rhees were present from Washington, but did not support Langdon. A majority of the delegates had never attended any previous convention and most of the Associations had never been previously represented. It was a new

body of men with little consciousness of the Association life of the past in America and almost no knowledge of the principles, activities, and programs of the Associations abroad.

The Central Committee from Buffalo were represented by Gray, Halbert, and Swan. This committee made an extended report of the increase in the number of Associations due to the revival and of the abounding activity of the Associations in evangelistic work. It was reported that a vast number of meetings were being carried on in cities, towns, and rural districts all over America.

One feature of the program was an essay presented by A. L. Thompson of Bridgeport, Connecticut, on the "Relation of the Association to the Church."

The Boston Association had taken a distinctive step at the very start in allying itself with the Church by requiring that active members must be members of evangelical churches. This made the Association practically an agency of the united churches. To clarify further this relationship, a resolution was unanimously adopted at the Montreal Convention (Montreal Convention Report, 1856, p. 68) as follows: "Resolved, . . . that we do not intend that this institution shall take the highest place in our affections or the largest share in our labors but that we hold this organization as auxiliary to the divinely appointed means of grace, the *Church* and the *preaching of the Gospel*." This resolution was reaffirmed at the Richmond Convention the following year and the Associations were urged to avoid carefully in their enterprises anything which might interfere with duties of members to their respective churches.

In discussing the relation of the Association to the Church, Thompson in his essay said, "To a certain class of minds our very right to existence is not without question, inasmuch as that existence seems to



them to reflect painfully upon the Church." (Troy Convention Report, 1859, p. 23.) "To them there is a tone almost of insult in the plea that a work unaccomplished and a want not ministered to call us away."

The rapid growth of the Association made it necessary to have a clear understanding of its relation to the Church. The increasing evangelistic activity intensified this necessity. Thompson said, "Witness the tent on Boston Common—in the squares of Philadelphia and Cincinnati—the countless neighborhood meetings—the mission schools of every city and town of size in the land."

Thompson took the position that the Association was the offspring of the Church and that it was auxiliary to it. He went still further and took the only position on which the Young Men's Christian Association can permanently stand, that it is a part of the Church. He said, "Of the Church these Associations are an *integral part*, the light-armed, chosen, consecrated, fleet of foot, and trusty band sent out to reconnoitre and open the way for salvation to follow."

The device of requiring active members to be members of the Church has proved a statesmanly plan. It placed the Association in the hands of laymen. It made the Association dependent upon the Church for support but it left the Association freedom of action in its own affairs. The churches have adequate control because the Association must so conduct its affairs as to merit financial support and Church approval. On the other hand, no denomination can dictate the details of Association policy. Thompson outlined for all time the true relationship of the Association to the Church when he described it as an "integral part."

The Association has succeeded in uniting itself to the denominations and at the same time retaining its

interdenominational character. It has, however, never accepted Langdon's contention that it must not follow any policy contrary to any tenet of any denomination which it recognizes. The Association has retained the right of independent judgment and action.\*

Rev. George S. Fox, Episcopal minister from Philadelphia, presented a paper which aroused an extended debate on the real scope and mission of the Association. It was closely tied up with the discussion of Thompson's paper on the "Relation of the Association to the Church." Its subject was the "Relation and Duty of Associations to City, Town, and Village Evangelization."

Fox set out to argue for a specialized field for the Association. He said:

"The field of Christian labor is as vast as the world itself, the classes to be operated upon, as varied as the ages and conditions of life, and the idea that we,

\* The extensive correspondence of recent commissions of the Association in relation to the Churches (see report of the Detroit International Convention, 1919) gave evidence of continued unrest in the ministry regarding the Association's relation to the Churches. Although our continuous control since the Civil War period has been vested in Church members, the Churches do not consider the Association to be a constituent part. It is something aloof, and the continuous claim of Association members that the Association is "a part of the Churches" and "the right arm of the Churches" is a supposition which does not receive similar reiteration at the hands of Church leaders.

The fact is, the articulation of the organized Associations with the organized Churches is not perfected. There are a multitude of other societies organized and administered by Christian people which the Churches as such do not claim as their own, though they are proud to have promoted the principles of service and trained the individuals who in their private capacities have carried forward these good works. It has been said that the Church is a poor executor of her own ideals. It must be said equally that the Association is an imperfect exponent of its theory of its being dominated by the Churches. The official unity of the Association with these great spiritual forces waits for solution. The spiritual unarticulated unity of Church people with the Association for the ideals and service of the Association is much stronger than the official.—R. E. L.

as an Association, should attempt to occupy the whole field or to meet the wants of every class ought not to gain a second thought from any intelligent considerator of the nature and capacity of our organizations and yet it is by a practical ignoring of this inability that many of our Associations are wasting their energies and destroying their capability to perform the work for which we believe they were called into being.

"We hold that the object of the Young Men's Christian Associations, as their name implies, is and ought to be the moral elevation of *young men* and that any Association departs widely from its high calling when it engages in works no matter how good and praiseworthy in themselves, . . . if they have not especial bearing upon this particular class.

"The establishment of this position indeed narrows our field of labor but it in the same proportion concentrates our energies."

Fox, without any apparent sense of incongruity, then went on to recommend the establishment of union prayer meetings as one of the great means for promoting the object of the Associations. He submitted the following resolutions: "1. That the work of the Young Men's Christian Association is preeminently the evangelization of young men and that all efforts which we put forth in the capacity of its members should have special bearing upon this class. . . . 4. That union prayer meetings and preaching in places where congregations of young men can best be obtained have . . . proved to be so peculiarly fitted to our organization that this convention commends them to the Associations of the country at large."

Eells of Cleveland opposed the position taken by Fox. He said, speaking of small communities: "You cannot keep up the life and spirit of such organiza-

tions unless you give them Sabbath school work, mission work, and tract distribution. There should be plenty for members to do in the evangelization of whole neighborhoods everywhere with all classes, sexes, ages. . . . I cannot endorse the idea that all the work of Christian Associations should be confined to the evangelization of young men."

Rev. G. G. Smith of Macon, Georgia, "dissented from the recommendations of the essay." Even McCormick of New York, an old Association leader, said, "Let us go in and occupy *every field* not already occupied."

Eells proposed as a substitute for Fox's resolution, "Resolved that while we should work especially in behalf of young men, for the sake of our Association, as well as for the sake of our Master's cause, we should be ready to enter upon any work which He shall open before us."

Langdon at once replied, reading from the Cincinnati Convention Report to show that Eells then reported a resolution maintaining that the aim of the Association was the evangelization of young men. Eells replied that "the work of two years had changed the character of such organizations and given them new power." A long debate followed.

At a later session Langdon presented his paper on "The Duty of the Association to Young Men." In this paper Langdon introduced a new element into the controversy, which was already at a white heat. He urged first that the only legitimate field of the Association was work for young men, and second that in the promoting of that work the Associations must not violate the convictions of any of the denominations of which the Association is composed; that certain of these denominations held that the Church was the only constituted authority for the "general propagation of the Gospel" and that the As-

sociations were in danger of usurping its function. In closing he submitted the following resolutions.

“ . . . Third, Resolved—that the Young Men’s Christian Association is not an institution for the general propagation of the Gospel. It is not hers to enter upon the work of evangelization nor upon the independent exercise of any of the functions of the visible Church of Christ; but it is rather a function of the Church under its entire control and auxiliary and subordinate to the same and, therefore, incapable of entering upon any field of labor which may not be virtually and practically the common field of each and every denomination in the Association rather than the field of the Association itself.

“Resolved—that the institution abides by its historic position, that it is an institution for the ‘formation and development in young men of Christian character and Christian activity’ and

“That it deprecates any departure from this limitation of its sphere as greatly detrimental to its influence and usefulness.”

William H. Fowle of Alexandria “regretted exceedingly the introduction of this paper—he differed from it *in toto*.” He presented an answer to each item. The debate was postponed to a later session when the resolutions of Langdon, Fox, and Eells were all brought up together.

Fox failed to support his previous contention. He withdrew his resolution limiting the field of the Association to young men and accepted the substitute presented by Eells, thus abandoning Langdon to his fate. Langdon later vividly described the scene as follows:

“Of this discussion the report in the Convention journal gives no real account and it notes but a fraction of what was said. The Philadelphia *Presbyterian* was accurate in saying that a ‘warm debate ensued.’”

“Nothing could be kinder nor more considerate

than the personal treatment I received. . . . But not a voice was raised for the position which I defended. Some speakers went so far as to say that the churches had wholly failed, that their division had put it out of their power to evangelize the world, and that the Association had, therefore, been raised up to do this work in their stead. Others were content with insisting that as a Christian body we were bound to do any Christian work that we could.

"As for my resolutions, the *Presbyterian* adds, 'Everyone spoke against them. . . . Mr. Langdon was like a lone sheep among three hundred ravenous wolves.\* All the speeches can be summed into a very few words; they were all against the resolutions.'

"The excitement was great; the situation was really dramatic. I felt that I was contending not only for my own footing in the Associations . . . but for the whole future of the Associations themselves, for their relations to those in the old world, and for their place in respect to the Church of Christ.

"The rule restricting a member to a single speech was suspended in my favor. Standing at bay as it

\* The majority against Langdon was wrong, as majorities usually are when it comes to moral leadership. This is history. Social righteousness is as great a human cause, following the European War of 1914-1918, as slavery was during the Civil War, but it is doubtful if America has suffered enough in the great war to bring about a general atonement and appreciation of what is involved in the social reconstruction of Jesus. We shall probably have to suffer more before we will be sensitive to the will of Christ for the social order. There are men who argue now that questions involving profits, capital, labor, wealth, should not be discussed in the Association because it will "split the brotherhood." If Langdon had listened to what the men said about him in his day, he would have kept still, for it is evident that the position which he took and defended was violently assailed, as was he personally, but ultimately he changed the course of the whole movement. Langdon's exhilarating example is before the young and progressive leaders of our day. They have principles of greater importance even to fight for in the final redemption of the Association Movement to the complete service of society.—R. E. L.

were at the foot of the pulpit stair, I made nearly every other speech, contending for hours practically against the whole convention. I spoke with all the powers of my intellect, with all the energies of my soul. I was forced back step by step and hope by hope from the institution for which I had labored so long, which I loved so truly and for which I had expected so much.

"What this cost me, I am sure that many realized, for other voices than mine were choked in utterance. But my first allegiance was due to my Church. Even in the Association it was due to duty and truth. When, therefore, without a single dissentient voice save my own my resolutions were utterly rejected and one adopted declaring that the Associations 'should be ready to enter upon any work He shall open before us' I had but one thing to do. I had virtually been shut out."

"The scene," said the Philadelphia *Presbyterian*, "was very affecting, nearly all the delegates being in tears at parting with their beloved leader." It is an interesting incident to which Richard C. Morse has called attention that Cephas Brainerd, who was later to lead the Associations back to their appropriate field of work for young men by young men, listened to this discussion and was the one to move that the debate be closed.

We cannot sympathize with Langdon's fear that the Association would override or usurp the function of the Church, but history must without equivocation vindicate his position that it must have a limited specialized field if it is to prosper or prove its right to exist. Some statements in Langdon's resolutions might be pressed to mean that the Association should leave all religious meetings and religious instruction to be carried on by the churches, limiting the Associations to purely social activities.

The Troy Convention marks the close of Langdon's brilliant, devoted, and almost passionate leadership of the American Association movement. For seven years, though a busy young man struggling to make his own way in the world, he had been the dominant personality, the original thinker, the creative and fearless spirit who gave direction and vision to the infant organization. At twenty-one he joined with two other young men in founding the Washington Association. He became its first corresponding secretary. In the same year he conceived the idea of confederating the American Associations. At twenty-three he succeeded in assembling the Buffalo Convention and in securing the passage of the resolutions establishing the Confederation. He was made general secretary of the first Central Committee. At twenty-four in his reports and official communications he formulated the policy of international supervision and secured the ratification of the Confederation by the local Associations. At twenty-five he became foreign secretary of the Central Committee. At twenty-six he toured at his own expense the Associations of Europe and developed the foreign policy of the American Association. At twenty-eight at the Troy Convention he stood alone against the three hundred delegates, who under the spell of the great revival proposed to divert the Association from its distinctive field and make it practically a substitute for the Church.

It is interesting that Langdon rendered all of this service as a volunteer and was never a salaried officer.

At the Troy Convention Richard C. McCormick of New York succeeded Langdon as foreign secretary. The convention voted to transfer the headquarters of the Association to Richmond, Virginia, and to hold the convention for 1860 at New Orleans.

In the meantime unobserved by the Central Com-



mittee or any of the leaders there was taking place the beginnings of a movement which was destined to become one of the greatest religious influences in modern life.

#### SEC. 44.—STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

One of the great movements inspired by the Young Men's Christian Association has been the organization and development of the religious life of students throughout the world. This result has been due to spontaneous effort among students as well as to contact with the Association. Such organizations as the "Society of Christian Brethren," founded at Harvard in 1802, and the various societies of religious inquiry were significant of the early religious interest among students. The greatest impetus was given by the missionary awakening at Williams College in 1806, which resulted in a student missionary society two years later and indirectly contributed to the founding of the Philadelphia Society at Princeton in 1825. ("Student Young Men's Christian Association Movement of North America," Shedd, 1914, p. 28.) This organization at Princeton was later more influential in promoting the intercollegiate student Association movement than any of the small group of student organizations which prior to 1877 bore the name of or were recognized as Young Men's Christian Associations.

The earliest of these societies were organized in 1858 at the Universities of Michigan and Virginia. It is an immensely interesting fact that they were inspired by the great revival which was at that time stirring the religious life of the entire country. While the organization of these two student Associations did not lead immediately to a widespread movement among students, they are significant as pioneers and

forerunners of one of the most fruitful religious movements of modern times.

We will not enter into the discussion as to which society is entitled to be regarded as the founder of the student Association movement. It is doubtful if either deserves this honor. This matter is fully presented by C. P. Shedd in his thesis on the student Young Men's Christian Association. It would be difficult to maintain that the student Association movement has ever been fully dominated by the Association or has ever accepted the full program of the modern Association. It has remained up to the present time the religious and missionary organization of the colleges analogous to the Williams and Princeton societies and has never taken control of or had the power to unify and manage the activities of undergraduate student life, as is done in the army huts for the soldiers or in the city Association for its members. The student Association has never been able to dominate the leisure time of the undergraduate or develop a program for the training of the whole man. This has been left to the university, and the student movement has usually confined itself to religious work, though in many large institutions buildings are maintained as social resorts. This specialization on the religious life has made the student movement the most advanced in spiritual work of any group of Associations.

When the revival of 1857-1858 was at its height in Philadelphia a union prayer meeting was carried on by the city Association at the University of Pennsylvania. The two institutions where the revival left the most permanent result were the state universities of Michigan and Virginia.

In the winter of 1857 a marked religious interest arose among the students at Ann Arbor. During the Christmas holidays a daily prayer meeting was held

in the room of one of the undergraduates which was attended by representatives of each of the four classes. One of these students who later became a member of the faculty was Adam K. Spence. His mother, Mrs. Elizabeth K. Spence, suggested to him the advisability of organizing a Young Men's Christian Association among the students. Mrs. Spence gave the students an account of the work of this society and later wrote some verses which commemorated the new organization established at Ann Arbor. A committee of the students made a favorable report and the society was organized early in 1858. No written constitution prior to 1859 has been preserved and the organization, while commonly referred to as a Young Men's Christian Association, was named in the constitution the "Student Christian Association." Spence later became active in work among students and in 1868 at the International Convention at Detroit urged a resolution in favor of a movement to establish student Associations in all institutions of learning. This resolution failed of adoption, but by Professor Spence's effort a similar resolution was passed two years later at the convention at Indianapolis.

In the judgment of C. P. Shedd the organization at the University of Virginia more fully embodied the true conception of a college Young Men's Christian Association than the Student Christian Association at Ann Arbor, though it is evident the Ann Arbor society has had a continuous existence since February, 1858.

Charlottesville, in the edge of the Blue Ridge range, which Poe romantically called the "ragged mountains of Virginia," had for over thirty years been the home of the most eastern and southern state university in America, founded on plans drawn by that versatile statesman, Thomas Jefferson. The university

was regarded as a godless institution by the more conservatively orthodox, but it had in its organizations a spiritual leader of fine type and great influence in the chaplain, Rev. Denby Carr Harrison, the forerunner of the brilliant group of college general secretaries who have served as Christian leaders of the modern undergraduate world. Shedd points out Harrison's share in establishing and promoting the Virginia organization.

In the tide of the great revival a local Young Men's Christian Association was organized in Charlottesville. This is recorded in the *Quarterly Reporter* for April, 1858. Undoubtedly the organization of this Association in the little college town furnished the model for the university Association. The religious interest of the community spread to the university. Early in 1858 student meetings were held and Christian students from the university were most earnest in fostering religious work in the rural regions in the vicinity. In fact, the religious destitution of the adjacent country was one of the leading motives for founding the university Association which in a short time was sending out regularly some fifty students to conduct religious services and lead Sunday schools.

The Association at the University of Virginia was formally organized in October, 1858, by the adoption of a constitution which gave as its object (Shedd, p. 62) "the improvement of the spiritual condition of the students and the extension of religious advantages to the destitute points in the neighborhood of the university."

The story of the origin of this Association is thus told at length in the *Young Men's Christian Journal* for March, 1859 (p. 59):

"The wonderful outpouring of the Spirit of Grace during the past year did not, it seems, entirely fail of reviving influences in our midst. Towards the close

of the last session, a decided increase in the religious interest at the university was manifested by the establishment of a daily prayer meeting (which was kept up for some time), by renewed zeal on the part of many professing Christians, and a greater desire to advance the cause of Christ among us. At the same time, what had already attracted attention and elicited effort, viz., the religious destitution and comparative spiritual as well as mental darkness prevailing in an adjoining section of the county, began to appeal more strongly to our hearts. The zeal thus quickened, the need thus felt, was doubtless, and, I may say, the occasion of the formation of the Christian Association of the University. Initiatory steps to its formation were taken by several of the students, aided and directed by our earnest and devoted chaplain, at the close of the last session, in the latter part of July, 1858. The Association has only this session been permanently organized, thus we have had but a short time to test our operations practically; but from present indications, we have every reason to be encouraged to persevere. Starting with between forty and fifty members, our number has increased, since the meeting in November, to nearly one hundred; among these we have earnest laborious Christians, and our committee on religious meetings, etc., has found means of employing some of them as teachers for the Sunday school in the neighboring mountains, as conductors of religious exercises at the almshouse, and for the colored people of the university; while our standing committee, composed of members from the various boarding-houses connected with the university, affords opportunities which have been improved for the Christian activity of others in the exercise of personal influence, the distribution of tracts, collections for benevolent objects, and maintenance of social prayer meetings at different points

among the students. The good influence of these last has shown itself in very marked results. In some cases, deep interest has appeared, and personal attention to religion among those hitherto unconcerned, and the hopeful conversion of several promising young men have gladdened our hearts.

"Our committee on lectures and addresses have begun their work, and are exerting themselves to maintain this interesting feature in our plan.

"The regular meetings held on the first Monday of every month have been well attended; and with some sacrifice of time on the part of those conducting the business, good management, and judicious variety, they may continue to attract and interest. The meetings of the executive committee are held as occasion demands. This committee, elected at the regular meetings of the Association in October and February, constitutes the official management of the society.

"The distinctive principles your circular refers to, viz., Christian union and the recognition of individual Christian duty, we have all thus far been laboring harmoniously to advance, with some degree of success under the divine blessing. We would ask your cooperation as far as possible, your sympathy, and your prayers, that the divine favor may be vouchsafed to us in carrying on this work at so important a point with such great prospects for good."

The Association at the University of Virginia applied for admission to the Confederation and became a member in April, 1860. No student representative of any college association was present at any of the international conventions held during this period.

The student associations at the Universities of Michigan and Virginia sprang up during the administration of the third Central Committee located at Buffalo, but were not fostered by it in any special

manner nor regarded as a distinct department of work.

It is probable, however, but for the outbreak of the Civil War that the work among college students would have spread rapidly.\*

SEC. 45.—ADMINISTRATION OF THE FOURTH CENTRAL  
COMMITTEE

Richmond, July, 1859, to April, 1860

The Richmond Central Committee followed in the footsteps of its predecessors. It published the *Young Men's Christian Journal*, promoted visitation and correspondence, and called what proved to be the last convention of the Confederation period at New Orleans in April, 1860.

Interest in the New Orleans Convention centers around the resolutions recommending physical training and recreation as a part of the program of the Association. At New Orleans itself as early as 1854 "healthful amusement" was conducted. At the Montreal Convention, however, the resolutions proposed by Rhees of Washington favoring amusements and physical training had been laid on the table. The Cincinnati Central Committee, in its report to the Richmond Convention in 1857, discounted secular agencies. In the same year, however, Henry Ward

\* In historical fairness it must be pointed out that the American Associations, as contrasted with the European, have immensely benefited in leadership and breadth of view from the student branches and the infiltration of an educated leadership. The conservative element from time to time has produced a spokesman who feared the student branches and felt himself estranged at their progressiveness. This has only served to illustrate their contribution to the progress of the whole movement in the United States, through the Student Volunteer Branch and the foreign service, and to the progress of civilization in less-favored nations.

The Kingdom of God on earth must be socially righteous; rich and poor in America must look to the educational centers for that combination of idealism and courage which will make the new day realizable.—R. E. L.

Beecher, at the anniversary of the Boston Association, urged that both amusements and physical recreation be made a part of the Association's activities. The year following at the Second World's Conference at Geneva, Switzerland, Dr. J. H. Gladstone of London advocated recreation and athletic sports.

At the convention at New Orleans Leonard Chapin of the Charleston Association proposed the following resolutions, which on the recommendation of the Committee on Associations were unanimously adopted:

"In view of the importance and necessity of a place of rational and innocent amusement and recreation for young men especially in large cities and towns, be it

"Resolved, that the establishment of gymnasiums is both desirable and expedient, provided they be in all cases under the exclusive control of such Associations as may conclude to adopt this feature as a safeguard against the allurements of objectionable places of resort, which have proved the ruin of thousands of the youth of our country.

"Resolved, that it be recommended to the Associations to make their rooms as pleasant and attractive as possible and that to this end they be recommended wherever it is practicable to procure such scientific apparatus as will tend to instruct, amuse, and improve young men who may visit the rooms."

These resolutions were carried and were the first acceptance by an American convention of physical education and recreation as a part of the program of the Young Men's Christian Association.

While these resolutions failed to recommend indoor games, as there was much opposition from many quarters, they signify a remarkable advance in the direction of promoting the club life of the Association and increasing its attractiveness as a resort.



The New Orleans Convention voted to transfer the headquarters of the Association to Philadelphia. George H. Stuart was appointed chairman and John Wanamaker became one of the active leaders. It was fortunate that the machinery for supervision was located in a Northern city, as the outbreak of the Civil War practically effaced the Associations of the South and destroyed the leadership they were exercising in the Confederation. The convention called for St. Louis for 1861 was never held, but Stuart called a special convention in November in New York City which inaugurated the United States Christian Commission, the first organized effort to provide both spiritual and temporal opportunities for men under arms. The Philadelphia Committee continued in authority throughout the Civil War and until the Albany Convention of 1866, when the Central Committee was located, as it proved, permanently, in New York City.

## CHAPTER V

### INTERRELATIONS WITH EUROPE

We pass now to consider the foreign relations of the American Associations and will sketch rapidly the contacts between the American Associations and those abroad.

It was during the years of the Confederation that the foundations of an effective foreign policy were laid. It was to London that the American Associations looked back with filial affection. Interest in the movement on the continent of Europe also developed with acquaintance. "Likeness of kind" was a social force which drew these scattered societies together with an irresistible spiritual attraction.

The Boston society had originated the idea of appointing a corresponding secretary. The early Associations followed this example. The first Central Committee appointed a general secretary whose function after the first year was divided into two—one for home and the other for foreign correspondence. These arrangements did much to promote interrelations. The office of corresponding secretary led its incumbent to look beyond his local field. This developed a number of important leaders. Langdon received his first training as corresponding secretary of the local Association at Washington. It was this position which led him to found the international work on this continent and to become interested in the Associations abroad. Robert McCartee and Richard C. McCormick each served the New York Association as corresponding secretary. They were the most

active of the members of the New York society in general affairs. McCormick made a tour of the American Associations in which he visited more local societies than any other leader. He was also the first American to make a tour of the Associations of Europe.

The Central Committee followed the practice of the local Associations and appointed a corresponding secretary. The men who served in this capacity were Langdon, Rhees, Neff, Lowry, and McCormick. These were the men who developed the foreign relations of the American Associations. They created a genuine foreign policy which has come to be one of the largest factors in the American work. This policy was one of frequent cordial intercourse. It resulted, on the one hand, in America's learning and appropriating much of value from foreign Associations and, on the other hand, in stimulating the American Associations later to promote the movement throughout the world. It delivered the Associations from parochialism and led them to become international in spirit. The intercourse of this period consisted of correspondence, exchange of publications, intervisitation, and the granting of travelers' membership tickets to Americans traveling abroad. The intervisitation was by delegates to conventions and anniversaries and through tours by leading representatives.

The British leaders who were especially influential in America were Dr. T. H. Gladstone and Dr. William Arthur, both of the London Association. Doctor Gladstone spent a number of months with the American Associations and was one of the speakers at the Montreal Convention in 1856.

Leaders from North America were present at the World's Conventions in 1855 and at Geneva in 1858; also at many anniversaries of the London Associa-

tion and at the first British Convention at Leeds in 1858.

Some of the Irish and English Associations also undertook to introduce members who were migrating to America to the Associations of New York and other cities.

The chief influences from abroad were from the London Association and the Paris Convention (1855). The many American visitors to the London Association received the most cordial greetings from T. H. Tarlton, the honorary secretary, and his assistant and successor, W. E. Shipton. They brought home ideas of the need of well-equipped rooms, of employed officers, and of classes for Bible study. From the Paris Convention and the letters of J. Paul Cook, then president of the Paris Association, the American Associations received the "Paris Basis," which has had a strong influence in making the American Associations conservatively evangelical. Contact with the British Associations helped to recall the American Associations to their distinctive field of work for young men. The American Association leaders did much to encourage the European Associations, particularly the smaller ones on the continent. They also promoted an international system of correspondence and through the establishment of an annual convention and Central Committee at home encouraged similar efforts both in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe.

The foreign relations of this period may be divided into: 1, activities before Langdon's tour in 1857; 2, Langdon's European tour of that year; 3, activities following his tour, 1857-1860.

#### SEC. 46.—FOREIGN RELATIONS PREVIOUS TO 1857

It was the visits to London of Van Derlip, Petrie, and Duncan which led directly or indirectly to the

founding of the Associations at Boston, New York, and Washington.

In 1853 Dr. Alexander H. Vinton, bearing credentials from the Boston Association, was the guest of the London Association at its ninth anniversary. He brought greetings from America and reported the founding of Associations on this continent. Other accredited representatives from Boston visited London that year and Rev. C. M. Butler, D. D., of Washington, afterwards of Cincinnati, was also a guest. (First Washington Report, 1854, p. 20.)

Doctor Butler in his report to the Washington Association said: "I attended the Bible class which was held at the rooms of the Association on Sunday afternoon. . . . This is one of the largest of six classes of a similar kind which are held in London. On entering the room, I found myself in the presence of about one hundred young men and some of middle age who joined in prayer and singing under the lead of one of their number. The class was conducted by a layman, a zealous member of the Association, who, upon the portion of Scripture appointed for their study, asked questions, gave explanations, and guided all the commentaries of others and of himself into the most practical experimental and spiritual subjects. It was the most interesting, animated, devotional, and warming religious service which I attended in England. Great good has been effected by these classes, especially in the more business parts of London. It may be well for our Associations to inquire whether the same mode of operation may properly be introduced in Washington. . . . Immediately after the service a cup of tea and bread was handed round and an hour spent in a manner altogether suitable to the day. I observed some studying the Scripture appointed for the following Sunday and some conversing with great

earnestness with those who were endeavoring to lead them to the Saviour of the World."

Langdon became corresponding secretary for the Washington Association in 1852. At the end of his year of service he made to the Washington Association the most extended report of Associations throughout the world which had then been prepared. It covers thirty-eight printed pages, eighteen pages of which are given to the Associations of Great Britain and the continent.

Pastor Dürselen of Ronsdorf, the president of the earliest Association Alliance in the Rhenish and Westphalian provinces, gives an extended account of the workings of this Alliance, and writing to Langdon in March, 1854, he says: "We have found that the forming of the unions into an Alliance . . . has contributed essentially to give strength and vitality to the cause of the unions. We would, therefore, suggest that your Associations also form themselves into an American Alliance. In that event it would give us great pleasure if the American Alliance would enter into an intimate and fraternal communion with our own." This suggestion encouraged Langdon to promote the American Confederation which for nearly two years he had been advocating. In Langdon's report to the Washington Association is an interesting account of a small Association among theological students at Montauban, which plainly contains the germ of the "Paris Basis" adopted in 1855 at the First World's Convention. (First Washington Report, 1854, pp. 33-34.) This report states, January 18, 1854: "It is not without a lively joy that we have received and read your circular dated in the month of November, 1853. . . . We have neither library nor reading room nor religious journals at our disposal. . . . Every week we meet together to read and meditate on the word of God and there is at the close re-

ligious conversation upon the chapter which has been read. . . . Our Association is composed of theological students. . . . Our Union was established at Montauban in the month of November, 1852. . . . We have at this time fourteen members. . . . We give the two principal rules. . . . The improvement of the members which compose it and the evangelization in general. 'All young men are received as members of the Union who accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and their God, according to the Scriptures and who through the influence of the Holy Spirit, feel themselves called to work for the advancement of his Kingdom.'” It is interesting that this little group of obscure theological students should have practically formulated the doctrinal phrases of the Paris Basis, often called the Apostles' Creed of the Associations of the World.

Dr. Howard Crosby, president of the New York Association, in his report for 1855 says (Third Annual Report, New York, 1855, pp. 10-11):

“Early last year Richard C. McCormick, Jr., was appointed a delegate of the Associations to visit the Associations of Europe to bear our greetings to them and to report to us their condition and prospects. . . . He has visited the Associations of London, Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Greenock, Belfast, Dublin, Limerick, and Cork, with various others in Great Britain and Ireland, also those of Paris, Genoa, and Turin. The most cordial welcome has been extended to him and many of the Associations have passed resolutions thanking our Association for appointing a delegate and complimenting our delegate on his interest in the progress of the good work among young men. At every point it has been insisted that Mr. McCormick should afford all the information possible concerning the rise and progress of the Young Men's Christian Association of the

United States and the details have been listened to by thousands with the utmost delight.

"The young men of Europe engaged in the all important work of guarding the spiritual welfare of their fellow beings are anxious to become familiar with the movement of their American brethren and let us hope that the happy visit of our delegate may tend to strengthen the ties of our sympathy and love for our Christian friends in the Old World."

McCormick made an extended report of his trip with suggestions to the New York Association. He urged lecture courses, especially informal lectures to groups of young men at the rooms. He also advocated Bible classes on the London model, more social life, evening classes, and less constitutional machinery. He laid particular emphasis on the deeper spiritual character of the European Associations and urged the New York Association to establish branches in different parts of the city after the example of the London Association.

One of the most far-reaching influences upon the American Associations from abroad came from the Paris Convention. The two features of this convention which influenced America were the plan of correspondence and the statement of faith and object known as the Paris Basis.

Langdon prepared for this convention as able a report as he ever wrote. His study of the then existing Associations had made him better acquainted with the character and extent of the organization than any other man in the Association world. In his letters to leaders both at home and abroad he had persistently urged the establishment of a systematic plan of correspondence. (Note—This plan is described in Vol. I, pp. 168-179.) The operating of this plan during the years of the Confederation period disseminated information regarding the Association, gradually in-



spired a spirit of comradeship, and as time went on promoted a conscious world unity among the Associations. This has been greatly fostered by world conventions, intervisitation, the Paris Basis, and later in 1878 by the establishment of the World's Committee at Geneva, Switzerland.

The Young Men's Christian Association was the first Protestant international agency on a large scale in any way comparable to the Catholic Church.\* The churches, except the Roman, are for the most part either racial or national in character. Their international activities are nearly all of a missionary nature. The Association admits all national committees of all countries into a league of nations on an equal basis and aims at real self-determination on the part of each national committee and local Association.

The American Associations of the Confederation period accepted the Paris Basis. This was done at the Cincinnati Convention in September, 1855, one month following the assembly at Paris. Neff of Cincinnati (Cincinnati Convention Report, 1855, p. 48) introduced the following resolution, which was adopted: "Resolved, that this convention as the representative of the Confederated Associations of the United States and British Provinces does cordially approve and hereby ratify the resolutions of confederation and correspondence submitted by the conference of Christian Associations lately assembled at Paris and that the Central Committee be authorized to take the requisite steps to carry the same into effect." A reservation was added that any local Association at any time might withdraw from the World Alliance should it so desire. This was done to guard in every way the autonomy and independence of the local Associations.

\* Without, it should be said, any sacerdotal similitude nor ecclesiastical assumption.—R. E. L.

The report of the Paris Convention covering 125 pages was published in English and circulated among the American Associations. This report contained Langdon's extended study of the American Associations. It gave the American leaders a clearer idea of the European movement. It undoubtedly strengthened their conservative evangelical attitude by promulgating the Paris Basis and revealing the doctrinal teaching of the European Associations.

At the Paris Convention Shipton of London and others (First World's Convention Report, Paris, 1855, p. 8) remarked, "That it is desirable to have as little distinction of class or creed" as practicable. The Utrecht Student Association of Holland reported, "No confession of faith is imposed on our members."

The Association for Amsterdam, however, required a personal test which introduced theological dissension. Active members were expected to accept the following statement of faith (First World's Convention, Paris, 1855, p. 51): "We acknowledge that inasmuch as we are lost sinners, deprived of the glory of God, we owe the salvation of our souls only to the work of the Son of God, through faith in His blood. We desire while renouncing impiety and worldly passions by the strength of the Holy Spirit to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, while expecting the blessed hope and the glorious appearance of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

This society reports some internal dissension and states: "A liberal tendency (that is to say, the tendency of the latitudinarian or heterodox party) struggled against the committee which had proposed the adherence of the active members to the above profession of faith." The Central Committee at Amsterdam were authorized to pass on the regularity of local Associations. This brought some difficulties at

Haarlem. Regarding this Association the report states (p. 52): "When the spirit of liberalism appeared and caused trouble the Committee of the Alliance interfered but its counsels were despised. It was, therefore, obliged to exclude the Haarlem Union from the Alliance, in order to reconstitute it upon an entirely evangelical basis."

This was the method used to enforce evangelical orthodoxy.

The French and particularly the Swiss delegates maintained a sharply defined, positive position on the deity of Jesus. Max Perrot, president of the Geneva Association, in his address at the Paris Convention said (First World's Convention Report, Paris, 1855, p. 6):

"Working among young men taught by an Arian Catechism and brought up in the midst of rationalism, we are constrained frequently to controversies on questions of doctrine. We suffer in consequence under the reproach of dogmatic exclusiveness. We desire, my friends, to impose no articles of faith which the word of God does not enjoin, but whilst we desire to unite all who love the Lord Jesus, we cannot admit those who deny his proper divinity. Hence, we are brought into perpetual collisions with pastors and catechumens.

"Since Romanism has made some progress many have been impelled to a closer study of Protestant doctrines. This has brought many young men amongst us serious and strongly opposed to popery, but unfixd and speculative in their views. They say they believe in Christ and desire to unite with us on the ground of Christian life. But the divinity of Christ with them no longer means the same thing. They admit that Christ is a divine being but not 'God manifest in the flesh.' We feel there is no course open to us but to refuse a Christianity like this although

as a consequence we are accused of a severe dogmatic character and have to see another Association formed in opposition to our own. My friends, there is no Christianity which denies that Christ is God. And at Geneva more than anywhere else it is incumbent upon us to maintain our basis intact and to proclaim the eternal divinity of the Son of God, our Saviour."

Pastor Monod, also of Geneva, at a later session took the same position.

The delegates from Geneva also urged that the Paris Basis\* contain an "explicit declaration of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures." The convention decided "that the theological truth of inspiration . . . should not be imposed as an absolute condition of admission to the Association because it is a question the solution of which demands not so much piety as study. More must not be required than God Himself requires. Whoever believes in Jesus Christ as his God and Saviour, according to His Holy Scriptures, will be received into the Kingdom of Heaven, and whoever will be received into Heaven ought not to be refused admission into our Association."† (First World's Convention Report, Paris, 1855, p. 24.)

The Geneva and French Associations stood for a narrow conservative orthodoxy more strenuously than any of the other European societies and profoundly influenced the whole Association.

\* The author's attention has been called by W. H. Underwood of the World's Committee staff to the inaccuracy of the translation of the Paris Basis invariably used in American and English versions. The word "doctrine" (*doctrine*) in the original draft of the Committee was struck out by the convention and for it was substituted the word "faith" (*foi*). This is always found in the French reports and certainly gives a more spiritual and less theological quality to the Basis.

† How narrowly good men escape in their solemn affirmations from making their organizations of Christians more exclusive by far than Jesus made the Kingdom of God, and by what difference of measure.—R. E. L.

Alliance ~~Confédération~~  
des ~~des~~  
Unions Chrétiennes de Jeunes Gens.

Nous, délégués des Unions Chrétiennes de Jeunes  
Gens d'Europe & d'Amérique, réunis en conférence à  
Paris le 22 Août 1855,

reconnaissons que ~~les Associations travaillent~~  
~~à une même œuvre dans le même esprit évangélique,~~  
pénétrés du devoir de manifester cette unité  
tout en conservant dans l'organisation une complète  
indépendance,

persuadés ~~qu'aucune d'elles ne~~  
néglige ou d'opinion étrangères à notre œuvre ~~ne puisse~~ <sup>soit venir</sup>  
troubler notre action fraternelle; ~~en tout quelle n'ait pas la base~~ <sup>échange la us</sup>

Proposons à nos sociétés respectives de s'unir  
en confédération sur ces principes fondamentaux:

- 1<sup>o</sup> Les Unions Chrétiennes s'uniront dans une  
même association les jeunes gens qui regardent  
Jésus-Christ comme leur Sauveur & leur Dieu  
selon les Écritures, veulent être des disciples de  
leur Seigneur & dans leur vie, & travailler  
ensemble à étendre parmi les jeunes gens le  
régne de leur Maître.

Fait & signé à Paris le 22 Août 1855



The German Associations, which were more numerous than any others on the continent, maintained the Christian character of their Associations by appointing as officers men of recognized religious earnestness. They admitted all young men as members who were interested in the objects of the Associations. In practice this resulted in only young men who were members of the Lutheran Church uniting with the Association.

The American Associations were delivered from much theological difficulty by the plan of a Church test rather than a personal test for active membership. This plan leaves all doctrinal questions to be determined by the Church. However, by excluding Unitarians and Universalists they fostered a narrow spirit which still hampers the movement and which introduced theological bitterness—the very thing which the church test was expected to eliminate and which a personal test is calculated to promote.

The Paris Basis was approved by the American Convention as a general statement of evangelical belief and as a satisfactory statement of the aim of the Associations to unite Christian young men for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom among their fellow young men. This basis has, however, never been adopted in North America as a part of the constitution of local Associations nor has personal assent to it been required of individual members as in Europe.

The defining of the field of the Association as work for young men had a steadying influence upon the American movement, but this action of the convention was forgotten when the evangelistic revival a few years later absorbed the energies of the American Associations and led them to undertake, in the language of Langdon, "the general propagation of the Gospel."

The Cincinnati Convention had its attention fur-

ther directed to Associations abroad by the presence of Rev. Wm. Arthur, D. D., one of the vice-presidents of the London Association, who addressed the convention on the work in Great Britain. Doctor Arthur had been one of the earnest supporters of the London Association. He attended the first public meeting of that Association in November, 1844. At that meeting he supported the first resolution endorsing the Association. Doctor Arthur became a vice-president of the London society in 1845 and continued a number of years in that relation. He was also one of the lecturers in the well-known Exeter Hall Lecture Course.

The *Quarterly Reporter*, established by the Second Central Committee of Cincinnati, published copious reports of the Associations in Europe. These articles took the form of accounts of local work, the reviews of anniversary addresses, and full reports of conventions.

The most extended influence exerted by any individual from abroad was by Dr. Thomas H. Gladstone, honorary secretary of the Borough Branch, London. Doctor Gladstone was one of the British delegates to the Paris Convention, where he served as an interpreter. He also reported the work of the British Associations. In 1856 Doctor Gladstone visited North America and was present at the third American Convention held in Montreal. Here he met Langdon and Neff, prior to their visit to the Associations of Europe.

Doctor Gladstone on his return addressed the London Association at its twelfth anniversary exercises February, 1857, at Exeter Hall. In his address he said (*Young Men's Magazine*, May, 1857, p. 25): "Wherever he met with Associations of Christian young men he presented those messages of Christian affection with which he had been entrusted. . . . He



found Associations existing in every principal town and city in the Union and in Canada. They had been very rapidly increasing and might now be regarded as one of the social and religious institutions of the country. In their internal operations they followed very much the system of the English Associations but they were characterized by a peculiar practicalness of endeavor somewhat accordant with the character of the people. They had developed more of the secular element than in England. Every active young man found himself on one of the numerous committees and bound to do the work allotted to him."

George Petrie, the founder of the New York Association, while unable to attend the Montreal Convention, brought to the Central Committee from London 100 copies of the journal of the Paris Convention. The Montreal Convention approved the plan for a certificate in English and French to be issued to members traveling abroad. The convention also voted to appoint a delegation to visit Associations abroad and carry to them the greetings of the American Associations. Langdon of Washington and Capt. W. H. Noble, R. E., of Kingston, Ontario, were appointed on this delegation. Captain Noble's assignment to duty in England only permitted his visiting the London Association.

#### SEC. 47.—LANGDON'S EUROPEAN TOUR, 1857

Langdon had for some time been contemplating a trip abroad and therefore accepted the appointment of the convention.

The year 1856, when he was twenty-five years old, was the turning point in Langdon's career. Four months before the Montreal Convention, on May 25, he had decided to give up his promising business opportunities and devote himself to the ministry in the

Episcopal Church. In his personal reminiscences he says ("The Story of My Early Life," p. 115): "I arrived at this decision distinctly on these grounds—that experience had already shown me clearly that God had graciously endowed me with some exceptional powers and ability and with large capacities of usefulness; that the noblest sphere for the employment of such powers was in His direct service; that such powers were needed in the Church and that, therefore, I dared not reserve for my self-service any such powers and capacities of His gift. The question was not raised whether the Church wanted as well as needed these capacities or whether the Church would afford me the opportunity of rendering these services for which I was willing to give up those of which the world had already put me in possession. This was taken for granted."

In a letter to the Central Committee (*Quarterly Reporter*, 1857) Langdon gave notice of his departure. He wrote: "At last God, in His good providence, permits me to fulfill the trust committed to me, in part, by my brethren of the Montreal Convention, of visiting in the name of our Confederated Associations the Christian Unions of Europe and I will sail from New York for that purpose on the 3rd prox. I have always and devotedly believed that through the instrumentality of our institution our Almighty King is not only arousing the lay energies of the churches and bearing the controlling influences of religious principle into the mart, the mine, and the manufactory but that He is also heralding in the day for which our Saviour prayed—the day of Christian unity—close upon whose advent is promised the recognition by the world of our Redeemer's mission. On the furtherance and on the strengthening of our influence such intercourse as is opened by the visits of our dear brother Gladstone and others to our midst and those

of our own members abroad cannot be without great effect." ("Early Story of the Confederation," Year Book, 1888, pp. 50-53.)

During the six months of his stay in Europe Langdon was indefatigable in his visitation of the Associations. Upon his arrival in London he was welcomed at a meeting of the Association committee. He attended the Sunday afternoon Bible class and a devotional meeting. The London Central Association was already established in its newly equipped building in Aldersgate Street.

In France Langdon attended a meeting of the national committee and became well acquainted with members of the Associations at Paris and Nimes. He also visited the Association at Marseilles. Then he went to Germany. Here the Associations were grouped under provincial central committees but there was as yet no national organization. Langdon spent an evening at Berlin with Pastor Hofmeyer, the president of that Association, and attended a large gathering of the members. At Berlin the American minister invited a group of gentlemen to meet Langdon at dinner. Among them was Peter Bayne, editor of the *Edinburgh Witness*, who was an eminent literary man. Langdon recounts that he was seated near Bayne at table. They conversed on the outlook for Christian work and Langdon after dinner went to Bayne's apartments, where the conversation was continued until late into the night. Bayne was seeking material for an article regarding the American Confederation, which later appeared in the *Witness*. This article was copied by both the American and the British national organs. (*Quarterly Reporter*, July, 1858, p. 77.) Bayne spoke of the Associations as establishing "a Christian free masonry over Great Britain, America, and the Continent." He particularly advocated the American plan of an alliance and an execu-

tive committee and suggested that it might be extended to Europe.

This article, reinforced by Langdon's addresses and conferences, led the British Associations to call their first convention at Leeds in 1858.

Langdon also visited the Associations at Leipzig, Frankfort, and Heidelberg. He then went to Ronsdorf to visit Pastor Dürselen, the chief advocate of the Association cause in Germany. Pastor Dürselen led in establishing the first provincial committee ever organized. This was the Westphalische Bund at Elberfeld in 1848, which embraced 130 Associations with 6,000 members. He became president of this union and continued in its service for twenty-five years. He also edited for many years the *Young Men's Messenger*, the first Association magazine.

It was meeting men who were rendering continuous service like this which led Langdon to oppose the practice in America of frequent rotation in office.

At Amsterdam Langdon says: "I attended meetings both of the main society and of a branch among working men, in company with Messrs. Bruyn and Heyblom. In Geneva I was most warmly received. An excursion was made for me to Mt. Salève where I addressed a meeting of some forty members, going on from thence to Lausanne, to do the same with Messrs. Dunant, Cuenod, and Renevier."

In May Langdon returned to Great Britain in time to attend the thirteenth annual breakfast of the London society. It was with evident emotion that Langdon addressed this gathering of the parent Association and his remarks were received with frequent applause. He brought official greetings from the American Confederation and gratefully acknowledged the debt of the American Associations to the parent society. He also advocated the federation of British Associations into a national union.

Langdon again uttered the deepest desire of his heart for Christian unity—the work to which he was to devote in the face of the most baffling obstacles the remainder of his life. He said (*Young Men's Magazine*, July, 1857, p. 132), "I come representing a principle which is strong among us, the principle of united love and united labor, the spirit which seeks to bring together in intercourse and in feeling the Christian community which is arising throughout Christendom to bind us together with links more strong than iron, that the day may yet come, by this feeble instrumentality, the day which our Saviour's prophetic prayer has taught us to expect when all the world shall be one and the Church shall be one, and the world shall know that God hath sent Him."

Shipton now arranged for Langdon a tour of the British Associations. This Langdon describes as follows ("Early Story of the Confederation," Year Book, 1888, p. 51): "Beginning with Oxford, I visited Warwick and Leamington on my way north. I addressed a meeting of the Association and attended a breakfast with which I was honored in Edinburgh. From thence I went to Glasgow and Belfast. From this point, I attended and addressed a meeting of the society called to welcome me on every evening until I sailed—in Belfast, in Dublin, in Chester, in Manchester, and in Liverpool. At every one of these—but perhaps especially in Edinburgh, in Chester, and in Liverpool—was the greatest interest shown in the story and in the details of the working of our general organization and the purpose expressed to aim at some similar plan for their own Associations."

At every point visited Langdon urged the carrying on of the plan of correspondence adopted by the Paris Convention.

Return to America naturally placed Langdon somewhat in the relationship of a critic toward the Ameri-

can Associations. He was without exception better acquainted with their general affairs than any other man in the Association world. Entering the ministry would have added to his prestige as an Association leader on the continent of Europe. Pastor Paul Cook was the founder and leading spirit in the Association work in France. Pastor Dürselen, president of the Westphalian Union, was the main supporter of the work throughout Germany, and Pastor Cuenod held a similar relationship to the Associations of Switzerland. But in England the Earl of Shaftesbury, George Hitchcock, George Williams, Samuel Morley, and R. C. L. Bevan were all laymen, chiefly in mercantile pursuits. The secretaries, T. H. Tarlton and W. E. Shipton, were laymen. This was equally true in America. The ministers supported and cooperated with the Association, but its leadership was in the hands of laymen. Entering the ministry would doubtless have diverted Langdon from official leadership in the American Association movement had he remained in this country, but his views, so diverse from those held by the new leaders of the Association cause, made his retirement almost inevitable. The great revival immediately following Langdon's return from Europe plunged the Association into new activities and brought in as with a flood a multitude of new Associations and new officers who were unacquainted with the policies and principles of the organization which Langdon and Rhees, Neff and Lowry, and others had reared with so much pains and careful effort.\*

\* The lack of lay leadership on the Continent no doubt accounts for the peculiarly ministerial and oftentimes doctrinal aspects of the continental Associations; for their lack of adequate means; and for their unimportant contribution to the extension of the movement in less-favored lands, as well as their slight influence only on the development of the ideals of the American Associations. Europe has influenced America in many ways, but not appreciably in this.

Langdon's growing interest in the Church had led him to meditate on the true sphere of the Young Men's Christian Association and its right relation to the Church. He saw clearly that it could only survive as a direct agency of the Church, subordinate to it in its policies. He recognized also that it must have, as he found it had in Europe, a clearly defined field of its own which did not usurp any functions of the Church or seriously duplicate other agencies. He determined, with all his love for the organization, with all his intellect and energy, to oppose these tendencies.

It was in his report regarding the London Association that Langdon pointed out the need of a clearly defined field and also used the expression which aroused so much opposition "That the Young Men's Christian Association is *not* an institution for the general promulgation of the Gospel but an institution to fit young men to be 'in the sphere of their daily calling' efficient supporters and members of the institution which was divinely appointed for that work."\*

It was inevitable that a break would come between Langdon and the evangelistic laymen now in charge

With increasing numbers and rising power, the American Associations, as contrasted with the continental European, have been a favored philanthropy of manufacturers, merchants, and professional and mercantile rich not of any occupation but of many. The Association has been a sort of inter-class objective for the philanthropy of the privileged leaders, and its rank and file has been made up of young fellows of almost every class, with the exception of industrial workers. The participation of manual workers in a continental organization such as this, is one of the problems of the future and depends upon what attitude the Association takes upon questions of social righteousness.—R. E. L.

\* With, of course, the exception of Sir George Williams, the British Associations probably will make no more lasting contribution to the American Association polity than they made through our own Langdon who, although at first defeated in our conventions, later saw the British position accepted and his prophetic leadership honored.—R. E. L.

of the destinies of the American Associations. In his first letter to the *Quarterly Reporter* after his return from Europe (*Quarterly Reporter*, July, 1857, pp. 52-53) Langdon shows a deeper conviction than ever of the importance of the Confederation. He says, "I have been confirmed in my belief that the strength, spirituality, and usefulness of our Association is, *ceteris paribus*, in proportion to their intercourse and sympathy with each other."

He then pointed out some of the weaknesses of the American movement, saying, "Excessive freedom in the admission of members (making our societies conspicuous for lack of spirituality far beyond any of those of the Old World), the uncertain and short tenure of office among our office bearers, and the indefiniteness of aims and object so prevalent among us are three great practical evils which lie heavily upon the American Young Men's Christian Association and which deserve both our prayerful consideration and remedial action."

Langdon dwelt further upon these limitations in his later report and particularly upon the lesser spiritual quality of the American Associations. He says, "Let us confess it with shame, there is less spirituality and more of a worldly speculative business—nay, I may add vainglorious—spirit about the American than any similar unions in the world." He attributed this to our carelessness in admitting to control men lacking in spiritual character. He said, "I pray for the day . . . when we shall with the care which characterizes our French brethren, welcome within the active membership, and invest with the control of our Association, only those very few whose spiritual character will add new light to the beacon which we are trying to set up."

Langdon approved of the social service and welfare work of the Association, but he never studied its



relation to religious life, and while he welcomed the spiritual interest created by the revival he was alarmed at its diverting the Associations from their true field of effort and leading many to regard them as a substitute for the Church.

Some serious weaknesses which he condemned were the hasty method of organization, the frequent rotation of officers, and the migratory plan which shifted the Central Committee from place to place. This latter was inaugurated by Langdon himself, but it proved a serious handicap on the work of supervision all through the days of the Confederation. It may be said that it was not until the International Committee became permanently established in New York City in 1866 that the American Associations were on a stable basis.

Langdon concluded his report of the foreign Associations in a memorable statement published in the *Young Men's Christian Journal*, February, 1859. In this he points out that the different characteristics of the British and French societies are due to the environments surrounding them and the type of people of which they are composed. Certainly we expect a different result in a Roman Catholic community unfriendly to the Associations from that in a Protestant community where the Association is an expression of the dominant life and spirit of the Church.

#### SEC. 48.—FOREIGN RELATIONS, 1858 TO 1861

The foreign policy of the American Associations during the years following Langdon's tour was a continuation and development of that already begun. It consisted of exchanging information through printed matter and correspondence, of intervisitation and the issuing of travelers' certificates.

This policy was steadily building up a world con-

sciousness in the Association movement. It appealed powerfully to the romantic imagination of Christian young men. Later the spiritual conquest of the world took on the nature of a quest worthy of the soul's devotion of the noblest modern Christian knight. It was natural that the American Associations should turn with more interest to Europe than the European Associations did to America. Tradition, ancestral customs, and the springs of culture were all in the Old World. There is a latent affection among Americans for the land of their origin which few leaders outside of Christian circles have ever known how to arouse. Politics and business often stifle this sentiment in competition and rivalry. The religious spirit manifested in conventions and international organizations is the greatest power in overcoming racial and national barriers and preparing men for the federation of the world.

No European delegate was present at any of the later conventions of the Confederation. Both Neff and Lowry of Cincinnati made visits to Europe. Neff attended the convention of the Holland Associations in 1859. Ex-President Pierce, who was then in Geneva, attended and took part in the opening session of the Second World's Convention in August, 1858.

The regularly appointed American delegates failed to arrive at the Geneva Convention, but two American members present, one from New York and one from Chicago, were invited to act in their stead.

The interest regarding America centered in the great revival.

Halbert of the Central Committee, then located at Buffalo, had prepared an extended careful report of this religious awakening. This was read to the convention and further amplified by Rev. Mr. Russell,

who had taken an active part in the revival in New York City.

The American Associations came to be represented at the World's Convention by W. E. Shipton of London. This was not satisfactory to American leaders, many of whom felt that Shipton never understood or fully appreciated the American work, particularly in its later expansion on the recreative side.

The greatest influence upon the American Associations from the Geneva Convention came from the paper on "Recreation" prepared by Dr. J. H. Gladstone, F. R. S., of London, a brother of Thomas H. Gladstone, who had not long before made a tour both of the Associations of North America and those on the continent of Europe.

Dr. J. H. Gladstone also presented this topic at the first convention of British Associations, which was held the following year at Leeds. Neither he nor the other Association leaders realized what an innovation this topic was, what a long controversy it was to inaugurate, and how it was to divide Association leaders, nor did they conceive of the changes it was to bring about in the religious thinking and methods of the work of the Church at large, especially in America.

As a matter of fact, the Church was passing from a position of authority and prestige to one of standing on its own merits. The scientific age in thought and the democratic type of life were undermining authority in religion as well as in all other relationships. The time was approaching when men would attend church services and support religious work not from any external constraint but because of conviction. The Church could no longer compel support. It became necessary to attract and convince. Religion must demonstrate that it produced character and the spirit of brotherhood and thus furthers the progress

of mankind. There was, however, at this time no thought of the modern doctrine of play as a means of developing personality, and recreation as the means of strengthening the fatigued body and mind in the presence of temptation. These agencies were discussed as a means of bringing young men under Christian influences and thus as indirect means of accomplishing the conversion of young men. It was only by the plan of trial and error in the face of opposition from those who claimed that the Association was being "secularized" that recreation found a place among the agencies of the Association. The paper by Doctor Gladstone received general assent at the time on both sides of the Atlantic. Doctor Gladstone argued that recreation was "a necessity to healthy mental and physical development." "That it is obvious that to a society having a spiritual end in view, such a feature could only be proper as an auxiliary." "That the Association should supply healthy and moral recreation only when the community or neighborhood does not otherwise supply those means." He concludes, "In favor of the entry of the Young Men's Christian Association upon this sphere of usefulness . . . only where there is, from the want of suitable provision elsewhere, a real need . . . only so far as it shall in no wise interfere with the prime work of the Association . . . and only so far as it can be guarded and hallowed by a Christian spirit." (*Young Men's Christian Journal*, 1859, p. 135.)

Doctor Gladstone urged that "repression" and "suppression" alone never bring good results and "an ignorant Christian of a narrow, limited spirit is often an obstacle to the Gospel. . . . Piety seeks everything that can advance the real benefit of man." (Second World's Convention Report, Geneva, 1858, pp. 69-90.)

The World's Convention at Geneva (1858), the

British Convention at Leeds (1859), and the North American Convention at New Orleans (1860) had apparently set their stamp of approval on the introduction of amusements and "innocent forms of recreation," but the puritan tradition was not so easily baffled and very soon prejudice and narrowness both in the Association and outside produced a reaction from which the British Associations did not fully rally until the recent "hut" work for soldiers in the World War and from which the American Associations emerged only after long and often bitter controversy.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE BRITISH ASSOCIATIONS, 1855 TO 1861

While the American Associations were laying foundations which were destined to give them the primacy of the Association movement, the leading influence and the most stimulating ideas continued to come during this period from the parent Association at London. This Association from its pioneer character, its clearness of aim, its steady success, its parental interest in Associations everywhere, and its location at the financial center of the urban world had an influence which was measureless. It held the affections of leaders throughout the Associations. Delegates and visitors came to Aldersgate Street as to a shrine for inspiration and guidance.

George Williams, Tarlton, and Shipton returned this affection and interest without stint. The anniversaries and May breakfasts at Exeter Hall, presided over by the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, were stimulating occasions which unified in an intimate way the whole movement much after the manner of the later world conventions. At these anniversaries representatives were often present from a considerable number of both provincial and continental Associations. To these gatherings came Doctor Butler of Washington, Richard C. McCormick of New York, William Chauncy Langdon, Theodore L. Cuyler, and many other Americans. From these gatherings they carried the spirit of the parent Association to all parts of the world. The affection and sympathy for the

parent Association was a cement that bound the organizations together.

The annual report of the London Association became an international document. In it was the report of the Central Association at Aldersgate Street. This was followed by reports in smaller type of the nine or ten metropolitan branches affiliated with it. Then followed reports of the provincial branches of the United Kingdom. As these increased in numbers they were reported in tabular form. Then came the colonial Association reports from Australia, Canada, Jamaica, and the other parts of the empire. Following these were reports of the foreign Associations, both European and American.

The parental type of polity, if it may be called such, as long as the movement was small enough to permit was a bond of great value. By this plan metropolitan branches became affiliated with the parent Association by filing with it copies of their constitution. These documents must show that the object was the spiritual and mental improvement of young men, that the management was in the hands of Christian men, and that the voting membership was limited to converted young men. Provincial branches were organized on the same plan.

By this method the committee of management of the parent central Association became practically not only the metropolitan board for London, but the national committee for England as well. This committee also entertained the Third World's Conference of all lands and came to sustain an important relationship to world affairs. As the movement grew this became an impracticable form of organization and it is not surprising that attempts were made toward a national council established on a democratic basis.

The managing committee of the parent Association acted as a sort of mentor to the British Associations

and to it were referred difficult questions for advice or settlement. Later the *Quarterly Messenger* was published by the parent society for the Associations of the British Isles.

The bearing of these large voluntary responsibilities was made possible by the secretaries and a strong group of laymen who identified themselves with the London Association. Besides George Williams and the Earl of Shaftesbury, there were George Hitchcock, W. D. Owen, R. C. L. Bevan, John and Samuel Morley, and a number of other leading merchants of the metropolis. These men gave a world-wide distinction to the London Association and were the chief means of securing adequate funds for its advancement.

#### SEC. 49.—GEORGE HITCHCOCK

During this period George Hitchcock, in whose drapery establishment the Association was founded, was the treasurer of the parent Association. Hitchcock, like Williams, was a native of Devonshire and had also been years before apprenticed in the same establishment on St. Paul's Churchyard. He rose to be the head of the business, as Williams in turn rose to be his successor. Hitchcock, while a religious man, was led to become an active Christian worker by the employes of his own establishment. His endorsement and support of the infant Association was one of the chief factors in its success. He described the efforts of his employes to W. D. Owen, a prominent silk merchant, and it was this that led to the spread of the work to various houses of business. He paid the rent for the first headquarters of the Association at Sergeants Inn, made the first and largest contribution to the salary of the first secretary, and was for years the chief contributor toward current expenses. He furnished the Sunday after-



noon lunches made up of "tea and seedy cake" given at the Sunday Bible classes. Toward the fitting up of the first resort on Gresham Street in 1849 he gave two hundred and fifty pounds, and he was the largest donor toward the premises on Aldersgate Street in 1854.

At the opening of these premises Hitchcock made one of his forceful speeches. He said: "I think it quite a mistake, to suppose that ministers are to do all the converting of men." "I feel a deep sympathy with this institution, it has hold of my heart and it has hold of my judgment. . . . I remember what London was when I was a young man. . . . Twenty-seven years ago (1827) I came to London and for some time after that it might be said of the young men of London, no man cared for their souls—or their bodies either. Young men in the large houses, for they were worse than the small ones, were herded together, ten or fifteen in a room at night. They were literally driven from the shops to their beds and from their beds to the shop by a person called a floor walker. There was no sitting room, no social comforts, no library; they remained until they were taken ill; then they were discharged at a moment's notice. Away they went, many of them to the work-house and numbers used to die prematurely. But what a change has taken place and principally through this Association and that admirable institution, the Early Closing Association."

At the second British Convention in London, 1859, Hitchcock was present and presided at one of the sessions, but his health began to fail about this time and he died not long after, in 1863.

#### SEC. 50.—GEORGE WILLIAMS

The great and indefatigable worker in the London Association was George Williams, the prince of Chris-

tian laymen, who for sixty years, from the founding of the Association in 1844 until his death at eighty-four years of age in 1904, was beyond all others the chief factor in this work for young men.

It is not often a man has the opportunity to be both the founder and promoter of a great cause. His later work will appear as the history of the Association is told, but undoubtedly he and the secretary, W. E. Shipton, were the vital factors in London during the critical years from 1855 to 1861. During these years Williams rose into prominence in business life. He became the most trusted employe in the firm of Hitchcock & Company, the intimate adviser of the chief proprietor, and then a partner in the firm. Upon the death of George Hitchcock in 1863 Williams was made the head of the business which had grown steadily since his first employment in 1841. Among his business friends in London were Samuel and John Morley, who seconded all his efforts to promote the Association, also Messrs. Owen and Bevan, who had favored the Association from its organization. The seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, then Lord Ashley, became acquainted with Williams in 1847, when the Association was in its infancy. He became warmly attached to young Williams and at his solicitation presided at the annual meeting of the Association. This led to Earl Shaftesbury's accepting the presidency of the organization in 1851, a position in which he continued to serve until his death in 1885. Williams, as his wealth increased, liberally supported the many benevolent projects of the Earl for the uplift of the working classes of England and Earl Shaftesbury was accustomed to speak of George Williams as "his best friend."

They sympathized closely in their religious views, particularly after Williams, at the time of his marriage in 1853, decided to reidentify himself with the



GEORGE WILLIAMS AT THE AGE OF THIRTY-FIVE



Church of England. Both the Earl of Shaftesbury and George Williams were staunch low-church men and opposed to "Puseyism."

When Williams was an apprentice in the drapery house at Bridgewater he had friends in both the Independent and Unitarian societies. In the earnest discussion which then arose, Williams definitely accepted the conservative orthodox view of the deity of Jesus and salvation through His death on the cross. He never wavered from this conviction. In his ideas of conduct he always held to the strict puritan ideals of his rural home in Devonshire. Sabbath observance was to him a sacred duty. He was a "teetotaler" at a time when this was regarded as an extreme position. His biographer points out that he even settled some important questions in life by the Old Testament method of casting lots.

But while Williams held these stern puritan rules of conduct for himself and accepted a rigid Calvinistic system of doctrine, he was so practical in spirit and so broad in his sympathies that he permeated the whole London Association with a tolerant, conciliatory temper. He was interdenominational in his attitude toward all questions. When an attempt was made to prevent Charles Spurgeon from addressing an Association gathering, Williams carried the day against sectarian prejudice.

Williams believed in sympathetic personal contact as the best method of Christian work. It was a favorite suggestion of his in telling how to lead a young man into the Christian life, "Don't argue with him; invite him to supper." His sole aim was the conversion of young men and he brushed aside doctrinal disputes and ecclesiastical distinctions because he saw that these were of no interest to the young men he desired to reach.

As he advanced in business life he faced the ques-

tion of the use of his own leisure time. Williams possessed the cheery, social temperament which made him popular with all classes of society. However, after some years of life in London he decided to devote himself completely to Christian endeavor among young men. In his diary, in 1857, he wrote ("Life of Sir George Williams," Hodder Williams, p. 146): "I do solemnly declare from this evening to give myself unreservedly to this Association, to live for the prosperity of the Young Men's Christian Association. I do praise God for having called me by His grace and so blessed me temporally. I do desire to be very low at His feet for all His mercies. I thank Him for the determination of so living as to be useful among the young men of the world, and now, O Lord, I pray Thee to give me from this hour a double portion of Thy spirit that I may so labor and work in this Thy cause that very many souls may be converted and saved."

When the question of broadening the work of the Associations and admitting "associates" to the privileges of the organization arose, Williams, in spite of pronounced opposition, carried through the advanced program. He favored the establishment of the club house or resort on Gresham Street and was active later in raising money for the larger building on Aldersgate Street in 1854.

It was chiefly due to George Williams that a group of distinguished Christian laymen became members of the managing committee of the Association. These men did not attend to the details of the daily activities of the society, but they were responsible for its general management and the establishment of policies. The Association is primarily a laymen's organization and much of the success of the movement has been due to the locating of final responsibility in the hands

of laymen. George Williams' greatest gift to the world was his own devoted personality.

SEC. 51.—T. HENRY TARLTON

T. Henry Tarlton and his assistant and successor, W. Edwyn Shipton, were the first employed officers of the Young Men's Christian Association. Tarlton became secretary (missionary) in 1845 and continued in this position until 1856, when he resigned to enter the ministry of the Church of England. He gave up a position of prominence and a larger salary because he saw in the work of the Association an unusual opportunity for service.

Tarlton and Williams were intimate friends. In deputation work in all parts of the country they traveled as companions, seeking to help in organizing provincial Associations. They roomed together during the early days of the Association and worked out in conference many of the plans for its advancement. Tarlton was a progressive man and favored the broader program of work. The *Young Men's Magazine* of New York in 1857 said: "The name of Tarlton is known and honored by an army of young men in America. . . . The Young Men's Christian Association found its development in London, where T. Henry Tarlton has been, as secretary of the Association, its leading spirit. His influence has probably done more to form the high character of that efficient institution than that of any other man."

Under Tarlton's leadership the first building was occupied on Gresham Street in 1849. Here the welfare work as well as the religious work was developed. Tarlton was the organizer of the branches in different parts of London and later of the provincial branches. He attended the Paris Convention in 1855 and after entering the ministry he was in frequent demand as a speaker at Association gatherings.

The London Association grew so rapidly under Tarlton's leadership that it was necessary to seek a larger building. For four years its headquarters were in the small rooms at Sergeants Inn, Fleet Street; five years in the more ample rooms in Gresham Street. The premises on Aldersgate Street were opened on September 28, 1854. On this occasion (Occasional Paper, No. 2, pp. 5-6) Tarlton said: "For a length of time the rooms were altogether too small for the accommodation of the members who daily use them and from their crowded state at the Bible classes on Sunday, they were very unhealthy. . . . It is impossible to chronicle the labors, still more so the influences, which have been exercised during the past ten years by the Association. It is estimated that upwards of 6,000 young men have attended the Bible classes, that 50,000 have attended its lectures, and that of the lectures published 650,000 copies have been sold. . . . Our aim will continue to be that which it has been, the moral and spiritual welfare of young men. We shall endeavor to use all subordinate agencies for the attainment of that ultimate object: Whatever may appear designed to reach the wants, purify the taste, and elevate the affections of young men we hope to have wisdom to adopt and to adapt for our use. Above all things do we desire that by God's grace we may guide many young men into the pathways of life and assist in training them in the holy art of doing good to others, that all those who are members of the Association may, in their individual spheres, seek to glorify Christ by serving Him in an unostentatious righteous spirit."

SEC. 52.—W. EDWYN SHIPTON

W. Edwyn Shipton became secretary in full charge of the London Association in 1856. Much of both the



narrowness and the greatness of the Association work of the succeeding thirty years was due to him. Hodder Williams wrote of the two secretaries as follows ("Life of Sir George Williams," Hodder Williams, p. 177): "Two more devoted and in their several ways more brilliant men than Tarlton and Shipton it would have been impossible to find. The first was the enthusiast, the orator; the second, the statesman and the organizer. Shipton would have succeeded in any walk of life. He relinquished a promising business in order to give himself wholly to the work for young men and he brought into that work all the ability and fertility of resource of a successful merchant. His tact, his quickness, his grasp of detail, his breadth of mind, his power of work, and his tremendous energy were of the utmost service to the Association. It was in a large measure owing to him that the work so triumphantly won through its most critical years."

His genial social spirit shone forth at the annual Christmas breakfast of the Association and at the supper-conferences of the committee of management which came to be held at George Williams' home, Russell Square. He was jealous for the welfare of the Association's cause and feared absorption in the organization would cause its leaders to regard the organization as an end in itself instead of simply a means for the spiritual welfare of young men. This is a temptation to the employed officers of any organization, particularly to those of long service. They are apt to become partisan and to forget the purpose of the organization in their zeal to build up the institution itself. Shipton never forgot that he was serving a great cause.

He was interdenominational in spirit and strongly opposed sectarianism. His great interest was in religious work and he always looked upon the welfare agencies of the Association as subordinate and only

to be employed as they contributed to or made religious work possible. Shipton favored social rooms and educational features, but was unfriendly to amusements. In answer to a correspondent he published the following statement ("Life of George Williams," Hodder Williams, p. 155): "We have no hesitation in saying that a Christian young man had better not compete in a swimming match, or indeed in a match of any kind. The desire of distinction will itself be a snare, while if he should win in the strife passions of envy, jealousy, or disappointment may be engendered in his competitors."

This was written at a time when the American Associations were discussing the introduction of physical training, and just after the convention at New Orleans had approved of both amusements and gymnastics. Shipton, in an editorial in the *Quarterly Messenger* on the occasion of the Shakespeare tercentenary celebration, speaks of two eminent ministers "who trailed their Christian priesthood in the dust to offer homage at the shrine of a dead playwright."

"We see," he continues ("Life of George Williams," Hodder Williams, p. 156), "that Archbishop Trench closed his discourse at Stratford church by referring to the correctness of Shakespeare's views on the corruptness of human nature and on the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Did he think such matters were of much account to those who were about to join in idle pageants, theatrical fooleries, and above all in the oratorio of the Messiah wherein as John Newton once said, roughly but pointedly, 'the Redeemer's agonies are illustrated on cat-gut! Masquerade and sermon, pageant and oratorio! It is all very mournful.'" Into what absurd positions the lingering influence of the ascetic and puritan spirit placed its advocates.

Hodder Williams recounts another incident which, while it occurred several years later, may well be recorded here to reveal how difficult it has been for the Association to outgrow the traditional attitude toward amusements and recreation. Some members of the Dover Association, who apparently lacked a sense of humor, succeeded in excluding *Punch* from the reading room on the ground that it was "contemptuous of religious influences if not absolutely hostile to them." ("Life of Williams," pp. 195-197.) This created a heated and scornful discussion throughout the public and religious press. The Dover Association board produced as its evidence a cartoon which contained "a humorous illustration of an old lady imparting to a sympathetic friend the fact that although she had permitted Susan (It's true, she's a dissenter) to go to chapel three times a Sunday since she had been with her, she did not cook a bit better than she did the first day."

*Punch* retaliated with a scathing article on the "Dolts of Dover," showing they had entirely missed the point and that the real meaning was exactly the reverse of their statement. In this plight the matter, according to the custom of local Associations, was referred to Shipton and the board of the parent Association for advice. They took the position that the articles in *Punch* were not unacceptable to religious people but agreed with the Dover board that the periodical should be excluded from the reading room because the Association was not intended for recreation.

Shipton wrote: "With the provision of opportunities for religious culture and education under religious sanctions our engagements with young men are fulfilled. We have never proposed to ourselves or in any manner undertaken to cater for the recreation of young men even in directions which are both lawful

and expedient. The provision for recreative literature would stand on the same ground as the provision for physical recreation or other lawful amusement. It should not be looked for in connection with the arrangements for the Young Men's Christian Association."

This is in sharp contrast with the present position of the American Associations that play and recreation properly used may be a means for developing personality and noble character and that fatigue which may be overcome by recreation is often the basis for temptation and moral delinquency. Shipton did not contribute toward broadening the work of the Association.

He was, however, one of the great popular Bible teachers of his day. His Sunday afternoon classes for young men, followed by a social hour with "tea and seedy cake," became the model for Bible classes all over the Association world. American visitors were greatly impressed with the conversational and at the same time spiritual character of these classes. They were always animated with an evangelistic purpose and at the close direct appeals were often made for young men to accept Jesus Christ as their Redeemer.

McCormick of New York at the Richmond Convention in 1857 (Richmond Convention Report, 1857, p. 64) said:

"Of the Bible classes of the London Association no language can convey too good a report. Hundreds of young men prize their privileges and profit by their attendance. Mr. Tarlton, the estimable honorary secretary, often has several hundred in his class, while in the same building (Aldersgate Street) and at the same hour, Mr. Shipton and others of the officers have large classes. Indeed, the British Associations with scarcely an exception devote the afternoon of the Sabbath to Bible instruction. Some eight or ten

classes meet in different parts of London at various branch organizations.

"The secretaries are usually the leaders and control the discussion though questions may be put by any member. Tea is furnished immediately after adjournment (say at 5 p.m.), that the young men may at once repair to evening service at the churches."

It was by visitors to these Bible classes from the provinces and from abroad that the spirit and ideals of the London Association were carried to all parts of the world. The Americans were slow to introduce this form of effort, but later, under the leadership of McBurney, conversational Bible instruction became widespread. W. Hine Smith did much to stimulate conversational Bible study on his visit to the American Associations in 1874. (See his paper at Dayton Convention and the discussion which followed. *Dayton International Report*, pp. 34-44.)

Shipton was earnest in promoting the lecture courses at Exeter Hall. These were carried on for many years before the Association purchased that well-known building on the Strand for its headquarters. This series of lectures was published under the editorship first of Tarlton, then of Shipton, in bound volumes which reached what was an enormous circulation for the times. The twenty volumes issued during these years formed a notable contribution to popular contemporary thought.

Shipton prepared for the Paris Convention in 1855 a history of the first eleven years of the London Association, which is a notable document. Both Tarlton and Shipton were executive secretaries, though this conception of the office was later further developed by McBurney. At this time in America there were few employed agents and none of them were outstanding leaders. The Montreal Association employed a city missionary chiefly for Sunday school

work. The Boston and New York Associations employed custodians of the rooms who were called librarians.

Langdon, Neff, George Stuart, and McCormick were all young men in active business life, who gave both of their time and means unstintedly for the Association cause. Writing to one of the American laymen at Brooklyn in 1856 Shipton said: "In London, we have not as with you committees for the discharge of special duties in connection with the work. Our committees are simply consultative. The executives of the society (Mr. Tarlton and myself) conduct its meetings, arrange its public lectures, keep minutes and accounts, beg and disburse its funds, conduct all its correspondence, receive young men for private religious intercourse, conduct classes, and deliver lectures to our own and branch Associations. Daily at the offices superintend the reading rooms, receive visitors to the Association, and supply information as to its proceedings, meet the representatives of branch or kindred Associations and as far as opportunity admits use hospitality toward them." (*Young Men's Christian Journal*, February, 1859, p. 31.)

Langdon, who had evidently at times found Shipton too much occupied for correspondence or conference, gives the following vivid picture of his activities:

"Our dear brother, the London secretary, sits at his desk in his sanctum. Can we not see him now, those of us who have been admitted? Absorbed body, mind, and heart, early and late. Surrounded with papers, packages, and letters, he sits among those who continually interrupt him, almost vainly endeavoring to grasp all the varied duties which he has assumed and to be faithful to all the varied interests which appeal to him.

"Someone is almost ever with him, a traveling

brother from the provincial societies or from a foreign land, seeking his cordial sympathy; some young man, impressed with the truth at a Bible class, coming for guidance, a member of the committee with some business plan, or some curious tourist wishing to learn of the society and its operations.

“And there he sits, if the immediate object of the visit be anything below the highest nature, divided between his desk and you, listening and even speaking, too, at times in a sort of parenthetical manner and with a partially abstracted look, keeping firm grasp of you, and at the same time of whatever he may, at the moment, have beneath his pen, and from January to December by unavoidable remissness in correspondence drawing heavily upon the stock of Christian love, which he ever keeps abundantly to his credit in the hearts of those who know him.”

What a picture of devoted unremitting service. But it is not the ideal of a secretary exemplified by McBurney. McBurney looked upon Shipton's methods of administration as a menace to the development of the Association. He coined the phrase “secretarializing an Association” to describe the process by which the employed staff gradually takes on the work which should be done by the committees and the members. The function of the secretary was to be the leader, the organizer of scores and hundreds of young men, who would do the actual work of extending the Kingdom of Christ among young men.

The chief task of the secretary is to develop laymen.

Nevertheless, Shipton accomplished a marvelous amount of service. He was not only secretary at Aldersgate Street, but he held a fatherly relationship to the metropolitan and provincial branches and through the world's conventions which he promoted he exercised a leadership over the Associations of all lands.

British Association leaders in the provincial branches chafed under the restraint which the "parental" form of national organization had established in Great Britain. Many wished a national committee elected by delegates from all the Associations and an annual convention at which an interchange of ideas might take place and at which the national council might be appointed. Langdon was active in urging this during his tour of the British Associations. The Association at Edinburgh and those at other points urged such a step.

One of the important incidents of this period was the assembling of the first British Conference at Leeds, September 28-29, 1858. This gathering was brought about chiefly by those who wished a more representative type of national organization, similar to that in America.

An officer of one of the principal British Associations wrote Langdon a letter in 1856 in which he said (*Quarterly Reporter*, 1858, p. 44): "I almost long to be in America where there are fewer prejudices to be removed before new institutions can be introduced. . . . This . . . will be one difficulty to overcome before we can have such a confederation as you have in America. . . . Many of us feel daily the want of advice in carrying out our great object. . . . I feel . . . how much I might profit by the advice, counsel, and sympathy of those of our brethren who are doing the same work in other parts of England. The day is not far distant, I hope, when we shall have the opportunity your annual gathering affords you of becoming personally acquainted with those whose counsel would be valuable."

Most of the British Associations accepted the Paris Basis and regarded themselves as theoretically in a British Union, but they had never met in convention and had no publication for the interchange of ideas



and for the presentation of reports. The anniversary of the London Association and its annual report with statistics of the branches were the chief but inadequate means of intercommunication.

Langdon in writing of this situation said (*Young Men's Christian Journal*, 1859, p. 109): "For that which has been accomplished towards organizing a 'British Union' the credit and the gratitude is due to Brother Shipton of London; but for the state into which it has practically lapsed we should be careful in similarly assigning the blame. The chief difficulty is that the London secretary has but one brain and a single pair of hands. The mistake is the never-abandoned hope on his part that he may yet be able to accomplish all that his large heart aims at."

It was simply impossible to carry on the local work of the London Association and give adequate supervision to the Associations of the United Kingdom. A compromise was effected at the Leeds Conference by the adoption of the following resolution: "This conference acknowledges the past services of the London Association as center to the existing Confederation of Great Britain and Ireland and requests it to act in that capacity until next year; but suggests that a committee of correspondence be appointed to assist the London committee in effecting any organization that may be thought desirable or in any other way to further the general interests of the Association."

This committee was named in the resolution and was accepted by the convention, but the effort really came to nothing in the end.

The second British Convention was held the following year at London. The *Young Men's Christian Journal* of the American Association (1859, p. 17) says: "Three central committees corresponding to that of our own Confederation, have been established, severally at London for England, at Edinburgh for

Scotland, and it is hoped that Dublin will undertake the same office for Ireland. These committees are empowered conjointly to call annual conventions and to make all necessary preparations therefor."

The British work did not, however, secure a satisfactory organization for supervision until the establishment in 1883 of the National Council of which George Williams became the first president.\*

\* The lost opportunity of those twenty and more years proved to be a handicap, only emphasized by comparison with America and not yet outgrown, it may be frankly admitted.—R. E. L.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ASSOCIATIONS ON THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE, 1855 TO 1861

It is not proposed to reconstruct in detail the work on the continent. Western Europe was divided then as now religiously between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant communions and politically on national and racial lines. It was not a unit. There was no such union in the main interests of life as was found in Great Britain or in North America. Western Europe has inherited a common culture from medieval and classic times, but it has no common speech, no political, religious, racial, or even economic unity. The period under discussion saw the beginnings of those struggles for national unity which have only reached their climax in the recent great World War and which have resulted in twenty-five independent sovereign states. This movement can never find an equilibrium except in some association of nations that will constitute a real world unity. The medieval ideal of a united Christendom, a veritable "City of God," had been overwhelmed by the upheavals of the Reformation and the readjustments to modern life. There was, however, an unquenchable desire for unity and solidarity in the hearts of the peoples of Western Europe. International organizations for fellowship like the Young Men's Christian Association express this ideal and it was the consciousness of this desire which so often thrilled the hearts of delegates from distant lands at world conventions.

The diversities among the people of Western Europe made any form of union effort most difficult. How the Young Men's Christian Associations on the continent were to promote the interests of the Kingdom of God among young men was a difficult problem. It is not surprising that both the type of Association and the methods of work varied in many respects from those in Great Britain and North America and yet there was a fundamental unity of spirit and purpose.

The continental Associations fall into two groups, those among French-speaking young men and those in Lutheran countries. The Holland Associations were more closely allied with the French group but presented characteristics of their own.

#### SEC. 53.—THE FRENCH AND SWISS ASSOCIATIONS

The three most virile centers of spiritual life among the French-speaking group were Geneva, Paris, and Nimes. The outstanding leaders were Henri Dunant and Max Perrot of Geneva, Pastor J. Paul Cook of Paris, and Laget of Nimes.

Like Mt. Blanc among the Alps, so Geneva stands out unique among the cities of Europe—the cradle of religious liberty, the home of John Calvin, Rousseau, and Henri Amiel, the asylum for the persecuted and the seat of science and learning. At the period under discussion its population numbered but 60,000; there were both a State and a free Church. The canton and the municipality were democratic. To the world Geneva is not a place. It has stood for an ideal. Without military strength or commercial greatness it has relied on moral power. It is not surprising that Geneva was the leader in Christian work among young men on the continent or that the World's Committee was later located within its borders.

The difficulties facing evangelical Christian work for young men in Europe were immense. Neff of Cincinnati, writing of his tour of the continental Associations in 1859, compared the situation at home and abroad. (*Young Men's Christian Journal*, 1859, Vol. 5, p. 137.) He said: "Here [America] everything is favorable; religion is respectable; piety is considered a desirable qualification by all; the Sabbath is generally observed and every man is free to worship his Maker according to the dictates of his conscience. On the continent it is very different. The State religion is, I fear, almost entirely a religion of pomp and ceremony. Piety, evangelical religion, are regarded as heresy or fanaticism. The Sabbath is generally not observed at all or made a gala day; and he who wishes to worship God in any other way than that which is sanctioned by the State, though he may not be interfered with, will certainly find more 'cold shoulders' than 'helping hands.' Even in Geneva the peasants of Savoy assemble in the market-place on the Sabbath day with the implements of husbandry in their hands to be hired for the week, while in all the continental cities I have visited the shops are open and business of all kinds transacted until '*rouge et noir*' on Sabbath night at Baden-Baden caps the climax of desecration. Under such circumstances the profession and practice of evangelical Christianity is no trifling undertaking, and such organizations as the Young Men's Christian Association on the continent appear to me to be instrumentalities chosen and approved by our Heavenly Father for keeping alive the faith and zeal of His children."

Langdon regarded Geneva as the most interesting Association field on the continent of Europe. (First Washington Report, p. 34.) Neff was of the same opinion. He says (*Young Men's Christian Journal*, 1859, p. 136), "If two societies were selected as repre-

sentatives of the Associations of the continent and Great Britain they would probably be those of Geneva and London because they best exemplify the different systems pursued."

The early history of the Geneva Association is bound up with the life of Henri Dunant.

In the summer of 1847 this remarkable young man with two others made an excursion into the Swiss Alps which proved of great significance. One of these young men, writing in 1858 (*Quarterly Reporter*, 1858, Vol. 3, pp. 33-35), says, "Often when we were clambering up our beautiful mountains, our conversation turned upon religious subjects and at night before retiring we rendered together our thanks to the Creator of the sublime grandeur that we had been admiring during the day." These conferences they decided to continue on their return to Geneva. The meetings soon became too large for the homes in which they assembled and the young men secured a hall belonging to the Evangelical Society.

The writer continues: "At this time our friend Dunant was by far the most active and the most devoted. He brought to the reunions and visited at their homes more young men than all the others. He was qualified to discover those who were able to join us. . . . It was he who first had the idea of our being put in relations with the young men of other cantons and other countries."

Henri Dunant also had the leading influence in founding the Red Cross Society. In 1859 he was a voluntary stretcher-bearer on the battlefield of Solferino. The scenes of suffering and cruelty which he witnessed there led him to urge the founding of an international society for the aid of wounded soldiers. He published in 1862 a treatise entitled "*Un Souvenir de Solferino*" and delivered lectures advocating relief in war. These efforts led to several conferences

which resulted in the "Geneva Convention" of 1864, signed by ten different governments, establishing the Red Cross. The new International Encyclopedia states (Vol. 7, p. 324, 1915): "M. Dunant bestowed his entire fortune on various charities. In 1901 he received the Nobel prize for services in the cause of peace." M. Dunant was also a writer of note.

Langdon said of Dunant, he "was the life and soul of our cause in the early days on continental Europe." Writing to Langdon in 1854 Dunant says of himself, "Henceforth, God willing, our correspondence shall become active; in fact, no one is better able to tell you of the great awakening which is operating upon the European continent, for the past three or four years among young men, for I have this work very closely at heart; and for five years I have sought by my vows and my prayers for the fraternal and Christian affection these ecumenical relations between the numerous Associations and meetings which I have had the happiness to see arise, little by little, by the grace of God."

Dunant became corresponding secretary of the Geneva Association in 1852, the same year Langdon was appointed to that office by the Washington Association. The early Associations owe much to the fellowship of these two devoted young men. Though widely separated they stimulated each other by letter and later met when Langdon visited Geneva in 1857.

Dunant wrote Langdon in 1854: "We believe ourselves to be the first who have desired this exchange of reports and correspondence between all the Associations of the world—for this we have constantly labored. We have always sent all our addresses, which are numerous, to all who desired them and we always encouraged all the Associations of different countries to place themselves in connection with each other. And owing to this we alone have extended

our relations entirely over Europe. We feel deeply that one of the ends of Christian unions is this Christian bond, which ought to unite the Christian young men throughout the world and which one day can have with the blessing of God immense power."

Langdon thus described the Geneva Association of this early period (First Washington Report, 1854, p. 35): "The hall of the Geneva Association, situated on the ground floor of the house in which Calvin lived and died, is open from 5 to 10 o'clock p.m., and about 250 young men are in the habit of resorting thither from time to time to reap the advantages presented by a library of a thousand volumes and to peruse the various religious journals, French, English, German, and Italian, with which it is provided."

The Association was open to members of both "the established and the liberal (free)" churches. "Twice a week are held meetings for the study of the Bible and frequent reunions draw the members together to speak of their own spiritual interests and of the affairs of their own and sister Associations. A series of lectures of a spiritual character are maintained, in which department, as, in fact, in many others, the valuable services of Professor Merle d'Aubigné have always been devotedly at the service of the society. Many of the members spend some time in visiting the sick and the poor and bearing the oil of comfort for both the body and the spirit."

The young men of the Geneva Union were eager to promote their cause throughout Switzerland and France. Henri Dunant and Max Perrot were among the leaders in this effort. A network of small Associations spread over the Swiss cantons, both French- and German-speaking. The most intimate Christian fellowship existed between these small groups of young men. The report of the Geneva Association to the eighth London anniversary says: "We think



that interchange of visits between different unions will be a source of great blessing for all. Two members of our society, Messrs. Perrot and Johannot, are gone, the one to Neuchâtel and Berne and the other to Basle and Strasburg. Everywhere they have been received with a cordial welcome and have participated with the friends in these different localities in the delights of Christian communion."

One Geneva Report (1858) states, "The Union of Geneva desires to exert a direct influence and to become a center of the Unions of the French language." This same report states that the Geneva Association had entertained as guests Heyblom from Amsterdam, Tarlton from London, Russell Cook from New York, and Laget from Nimes.

Dunant made three extended tours through the French-speaking Associations of Western Europe. On the first of these he was accompanied by Max Perrot, president of the Geneva Association. Writing to Langdon Dunant says: "Our sole object was the visiting of unions already in existence and the forming of new ones—we found great disposition toward this work in the Cévennes—a country of many memories in the history of Protestantism. We had the joy of seeing numerous meetings and Associations formed."

On his second tour alone (1853) Dunant visited middle France and found thirty societies and meetings in existence, the membership varying from eight or ten to as many as forty young men.

On his third tour in 1854 Dunant found still greater progress. He writes, "These gatherings and these Associations are multiplying in an incredible manner in this poor and unhappy country of France, so full of superstition and infidelity." The members of these societies developed an earnest spiritual character because of the opposition they had to face. They

also sought fellowship and intercommunication with other societies because they were so isolated and small in membership.

The Geneva Association surpassed all of the others on the continent. In 1859 its membership including patrons of the reading room numbered 250 and the society found it necessary to seek new and larger rooms. Max Perrot, the president, said: "Our prayer meetings these last weeks were crowded. We were obliged to have two or three at the same hour in various chapels and rooms." He also states with evident anxiety: "I shall have to find £300 this winter for our Association, which I must beg myself. It is fatiguing work to pay more than 100 begging visits even to pious people."

The Geneva and in fact all the Swiss Associations, like those in America, were not limited to one class of young men, but were inclusive in character. One report speaks of members from the highest social class. Another says, "The social position of our members is very diverse; all ranks of society, the rich and the poor, the farmer and the mechanic, the student and the clerk, finding place among them."

The Geneva Association attracted chiefly the young men of strictly conservative doctrinal views. The Association was especially devoted to Bible study. One report states (Eighth London Report, p. 43): "We are desirous by the help of God to proclaim with increasing clearness and energy the great evangelical truths." Article seven of the Geneva Constitution proclaims belief in "the divine authority of the whole word of God, the mystery of the Trinity; the everlasting divinity and humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only and perfect Saviour; the necessity of the Christian to work with the help of the Holy Spirit in humility, in prayer, and in total renunciation of self, in making known everywhere that

only Name which is given among men whereby they may be saved."

At the Paris Convention in 1855 the Swiss delegates wished to have belief in the authority of the Bible made a condition for the recognition of Young Men's Christian Associations.

The Geneva Association also reports uniting in prayer with the Association of Edinburgh "for the fall of popery, for the strengthening of persecuted Christians, and for the free dissemination of the Holy Scriptures in the countries under the dominion of the Church of Rome."

The secretary of the Geneva Association wrote as follows to the Association in London (Occasional Paper, No. 1, p. 17, 1853): "The times are most serious; let us not strive to conceal it; very soon persecutions may come and we may have to appear to render our testimony. . . . Let the word of our Heavenly Father be our only nourishment. At the very moment that the word of God is being attacked on all sides, let us be ready to defend it. . . . Men doubt its inspiration; let us receive it as fully inspired; men despise it; let it, however, be our most precious treasury."

It is not surprising that the Geneva Association leaders should have urged strongly conservative views regarding the authority of the Bible and have sought to make ultra-orthodox teaching characteristic of the Association. This had been the historical attitude of the church leaders of Geneva. Andrew White, writing in 1898 ("A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom," Vol. II, p. 178), says in speaking of the inspiration of the Bible: "The Swiss Protestants were especially violent on the orthodox side: their formula consensus of 1675 declared the vowel points to be inspired and three years later the Calvinists of Geneva by a special canon forbade that

any minister should be received into their jurisdiction until he publicly confessed that the Hebrew text as it today exists in the Masoretic copies is both as to the consonants and vowel points, divine and authentic." With this background the Geneva church naturally leaned toward conservative views.

In 1855 the struggle between the traditional interpretation of the Bible and that based upon modern scholarship was already intense in Europe though as yet little evidence of this was noticeable in America. Science, evolution, scholarship, and the new psychology and above all the social conception of the Kingdom of God were to transform Christian ideals, the conception of the Bible, of God, and of the personality of man. It is upon these ideas that the modern Association was to be established but very little conception of this was noticeable in Association circles either in Europe or America.

The young men of the French Associations were of the valiant type. Their work was largely a protest against the prevailing unbelief and evil conduct around them. They were the outposts in the enemies' country and were men of heroic spirit and deep spiritual life. In 1858 there were seventy-six Associations in France.

Speaking of these, and particularly of the Association at Paris, Langdon said (*Young Men's Christian Journal*, 1859, pp. 31-32):

"When one turns to the reports and letters from our French brethren, he is struck with the contrast presented by their history and our own as well as by that between the characteristics of the French unions and those of the French people at large. Where, as in England, the Association may be considered in some sort a development of the national institutions and character, it bears a national impress, but where, as on the other side of the channel, it is rather a re-

action from national institutions and character, it may be expected that it should be stamped in the reverse.

"While, therefore, we have seen our London brethren occupying a prominent and actively aggressive attitude, laying hold of secular channels through which to send abroad the healthy currents of religious truth, gathering large halls full of young men, established in an attractive and commodious building which, from the porter's stand behind the great front door to the quiet third-story rooms where full meetings gather for devotional purposes, permits no single thought of experimental position or of a struggling life—we turn when in search of our Paris brethren away from the Pont des Arts through dingy streets toward the Quartier Latin; and though we have entered the Rue Jacob and perhaps found No. 6, we pass the gateway-looking portal into the courtyard and ascend the stairs more than half doubtful if the address on which we have relied is right.

"Here in a small suite of rooms are found a few warm Christian hearts, it may be, reading quietly in the outer or it may be gathered still more quietly within the inner room, engaged in the study of the word of God—one day in French, one day in English, and a third in German.

"The French societies are small and simple in organization, possessed of little machinery and of restricted means—exclusively occupied in the cultivation of vital piety among their few members and attempting nothing aggressive. . . . The restraint to which such a society is subjected in Paris entirely prevents it from realizing their hoped for activity and general usefulness. . . . Its membership is almost entirely of students and others from the departments and abroad, rarely including a Parisian."

The president of the Paris Association, Pastor Paul Cook, wrote to the London Association, "Our

activities are quickened by the realization of the fact that every meeting we are permitted to hold may be the last, as we frequently carry on our exercises in the presence of the police who keep a strict surveillance of our proceedings."

#### SEC. 54.—THE ASSOCIATIONS IN GERMANY

The most isolated group of Associations during this period were in Germany. The German Associations were represented at the Paris Convention in 1855 by only four delegates as contrasted with fifteen from Switzerland and sixteen from Great Britain. Pastor Dürselen, the great leader of the German Associations, was made vice-president of the convention and took a prominent part. Only a small number of delegates from Germany attended the Second World's Convention at Geneva in 1858 and but three the third convention at London in 1862.

The first definite attempt on the part of the British Associations to learn of the work in Germany was made in the fall of 1854, when Dr. Thomas H. Gladstone, who later visited the Associations of the United States and Canada, made a tour of the German Associations. Doctor Gladstone wrote a careful account of his visit which was published in the Eighth London Report and also in the *American Quarterly Reporter*.

With credentials from the London Association, Doctor Gladstone visited the Kirkentag or Church convention attended by 2,000 leaders of German religious life at Frankfort, September, 1854. At this gathering the "Inner Mission" or home mission work of Germany was considered and as a part of it the work of the "Jünglings Verein" or Young Men's Association. In this intimate way the work of the Association was recognized as an integral part of the

home mission work of the German Church and resolutions were passed calling upon pastors to organize and promote these Associations wherever possible.

The relation of the Association to the Church, a vexed question in America with its many denominations, was solved in Germany by making the parish minister in most cases president of the Young Men's Union.

Doctor Gladstone reported to the London Association:

"The correspondence maintained with the Young Men's Christian Associations in many parts of the continent and in America had been sufficient to satisfy our members in England as to the Christian aim and the generally efficient working of the many societies which have so rapidly come into existence there during the past few years. Little intelligence had, however, been received from Germany. The Associations existing there were not in correspondence with our own.

"The fact of a large number of societies under the name Young Men's Associations being in operation in various parts was all that was known; and with the divided state of religious opinion in that country, the tendency to unrestrained speculation in the region of spiritual inquiry, and the likelihood, under circumstances so disadvantageous as those there presented, of such meetings degenerating into opportunities for mere intellectual display or even for political debate, rather than for the promotion of the simplicity of the Gospel—with a state of things like this it was . . . a matter of uncertainty and solicitude how far the Associations in Germany might have yielded to the natural current and prevailing tendencies of the time. . . .

"I saw it my duty in the first place to ascertain by

personal investigation the object, the character, and the conduct of the German Associations."

Doctor Gladstone was fully convinced that in all these respects the German Associations should be affiliated with and recognized by the Young Men's Christian Associations of other lands.

One object, he mentions, was "to draw young men away from the theater and the drinking-rooms, and to gather them together for purposes of mutual improvement, at the same time to provide for them a better aliment than they could find either in the atheistic or socialistic clubs which already abounded and which were a positive and a crying evil."

The German Associations were the first successful attempt to organize a religious society among young workingmen by Protestant leaders. Doctor Gladstone states, "The class referred to, known in Germany by the name of Handwerks-gesellen, are indeed so numerous that an Association of young men naturally conveys the impression of a society established for these operatives in particular."

The German Unions were compactly organized, especially in Westphalia. There was a committee in charge of the entire province, under this was the district committee, and under the district committees, the local unions. Pastor Dürselen of Ronsdorf continued through twenty-five years to act as the president of the Rhenish-Westphalian Union and in this way was a controlling factor in the German work.

The establishment of homes for traveling young workingmen continued to be the most unique feature of the German Associations. Doctor Gladstone reports to the London Association the most cordial reception from the German societies and also expresses his approval of their religious teaching. He says: "I associated with the Frankfort members not only in the more important meetings of the Kirkentag but



also at their ordinary meetings afterwards, when they were in their ordinary everyday aspect. It is with the most grateful remembrance that I call to mind the happy reception I had among them and the kindly feeling that was manifest toward me on the ground of Christian brotherhood—a feeling that would scarcely permit them to let me leave their midst and which showed itself by many attentions to myself and many charges of Christian remembrance and fraternal affection which I now deliver to you.”

Doctor Gladstone says of the religious life and teaching of the German Associations: “Gratefully and joyfully does my memory recall the exhibition I there had whilst sitting amongst them in their Bible class and joining, though in a strange language, their small and simple circle in reading and prayer, of the realized presence of God’s spirit sanctifying our meeting and rendering it a season of heavenly communion.”

The Unions were conservative in their theological point of view and avoided controversy. Doctor Gladstone writes: “Political purposes are dreaded, socialistic ideas are regarded with abhorrence, mere humanitarianism is known and felt to be unsatisfying to the cravings of the immortal spirit and the bare study of the letter of the Scripture, the controversy on Christian dogmatics, the mere intellectual gladiatorship in connection with religious truth, so often exhibited in the universities of their land, are felt by the poor journeymen and apprentices that form the majority of these Associations to be objects as little desirable in themselves as they are for the most part unattainable by them.”

The German Unions in the West and North made no conditions of membership except willingness to unite with the society. In spite of this Doctor Gladstone states that they maintained easily the religious

character of their organizations. In fact, they were so identified with the Church that the members were often scoffed at and ridiculed by worldly companions. In Southern Germany, on the other hand, the Unions required for membership the acceptance of the Augsburg confession, but Doctor Gladstone regarded this as limiting their usefulness.

#### SEC. 55.—THE GENEVA CONVENTION, 1858

The culmination of the Associations' activity in Europe during this period was the Second World's Convention held in August, 1858. It was illustrative of the international outlook and missionary interest of the Association at Geneva that it was chosen as the host for this convention. The deep interest of the leaders at Geneva in the work at large was a precursor of its selection twenty years later as the headquarters of the Central Committee.

Following the Paris Convention, Shipton, at that time the only employed executive officer in the Association world, took the chief place in general affairs. Charles Fermaud says of him ("Fifty Years' Work Among Young Men in All Lands," 1844 to 1894, pp. 7-8):

"The London Association rose into the first rank through its early international efforts, the completeness of the organization, and the great influence of its founder, George Williams. With him were associated other distinguished men. Foremost among them was William Edwyn Shipton, the first London secretary. He was a man richly gifted, of broad and enlightened views, and with a rare knowledge of men. By his talents and his force of character he gathered around him a little nucleus of friends with whom he was in the habit of taking counsel after the first Paris Conference in 1855.

“Chosen from among the most active and well-known workers of various countries, these men, the first representatives of the international idea, formed practically the first international committee, though without any definite organization.”

It was by mutual arrangement agreed that the convention for 1858 would be held at Geneva. The New York City Association, which had held aloof from the Confederation at home, was careful to state in referring to this convention (New York Report, 1859, p. 23): “It should be observed that the resolutions adopted by the Conference, express the opinions and beliefs of the assembled brethren, but were not designed to bind any of the Associations which are, in no way, responsible for their views, though the members generally will doubtless gratefully respond to their affectionate counsels.”

All plans and arrangements for the conference fell upon the entertaining Association, the first circular was sent out December 1, 1857, and a second four months later. The Geneva Association chose the topics to be considered. Two hundred delegates were present from ten different countries, more than attended any other world's convention until the eighth, held in the same city in 1878.

The conference was marked by a most cordial hospitality and many opportunities for informal acquaintance and intercourse. It was significant less for important enactments than for cementing bonds of friendship and promoting Christian fraternity. In this the spirit of the Genevese shone forth unexcelled.

The opening session was indeed impressive. The stately cathedral was placed at the disposal of the delegates. The report of the gathering states, “It was an appropriate opening for the conference to meet thus in this magnificent temple in which three centuries before the Reformers proclaimed the truths

of the Gospel." The evening session was held in the most spacious hall in the city and was largely attended by the general public. One of the interesting incidents was a brief address by the Honorable Franklin Pierce, ex-president of the United States, who was at the time visiting in Switzerland.

The first informal gathering was held in an extensive private garden where the two hundred delegates seated in a large circle responded to the call of the roll by nations. The social gatherings were in every particular so arranged as to facilitate the main purpose of the conference. The evening of the second day was devoted to a sail on Lake Geneva. The boats were illuminated and a reception was given on the grounds of Count Gasperin. The evening session of the second day was held at the country home of the president of the Association, Max Perrot. On the morning of the last day the delegates assembled for breakfast on Mount Salève, where there was "much interchange of mirth and good fellowship."

An incident which greatly interested the conference was the discovery by one of the delegates of a rock inscribed with the name of Voltaire and the date 1758. Attention was called to the statement attributed to Voltaire that in a century Christianity would be obsolete, only remembered by historians and students. One of the delegates to show the folly of this prophecy inscribed on the same rock the name of the convention and the date 1858.

The crowning experience was the solemn close, thus described by a member of the conference: "In the evening the delegates had the privilege of assembling at the holy table, to eat together the Lord's supper. What solemn hours for all these soldiers of Christ! What moments of emotion and bliss! How could they have separated in a manner more appropriate to their vocation!"

Of the addresses and papers at the convention, the most interesting was by Dr. J. H. Gladstone, F. R. S., of London, brother of Dr. Thomas H. Gladstone. His topic was "Of the Need of Recreation Natural to Young Men. Should the Christian Union occupy itself with this? To what extent can it satisfy this want?"

The main points of this paper have already been presented under the discussion of recreation and physical training.

The emphasis was chiefly regarding amusements, little reference being made to gymnastics or sports.

Shipton, with more breadth than he sometimes showed, spoke of the need of drawing young men away from places of evil resort. He said: "Piety does not diminish our pleasures but sanctifies them. . . . We should provide young men amusements innocent and useful." One of the delegates from Amsterdam reported: "A recreation we allow in Holland is tobacco. We smoke together. This does not harm our edification at all." This aroused considerable amusement.\*

The conference adopted the following resolution:

\* This traditional hostility to smoking has pervaded the American Associations north of the Mason and Dixon line. There was a vigorous attempt at prohibition in the Associations in the northern states up to the time of the great war, in spite of the use of tobacco by some of the leading secretaries and laymen, officers of the Association, and by many of the members in their other clubs and societies.

Smoking became so prevalent in the War of 1914-1918 amongst young men that prohibition became ineffective in practically all of the Associations. It was then limited to "smoking rooms," social rooms, or certain parts of the building. Smoking has never been prohibited in the railway, industrial, or other Associations primarily for working classes. If smoking were a moral issue, why such deviations in policy? The modern pre-war practice in the American Associations apparently was to follow the lead of such churches as the Methodist which had restrictive regulations, rather than the practice of such churches as the Episcopal, which had liberal practice.—R. E. L.

"The delegates recognize that the Associations ought to occupy themselves with this need of recreation, but as sanctifying it—leaving to each Association a certain liberty to choose the nature and the mode of recreation according to national taste and local conveniences."

The American Associations, as already recorded, took at the convention at New Orleans in the following year, 1860, the first definite steps toward carrying out this idea, but their plans were interrupted by the Civil War.

The Geneva Convention listened with marked interest to a report of the great religious revival which was then taking place in the United States.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PERIOD

Some interesting reflections are suggested by this reconstruction of the life of the Associations of America and Europe during the years from 1855 to 1861.

In the first place, this was strikingly a laymen's movement—the golden age of the volunteer worker. This has been less and less true of the whole Association movement up to the present time, until now few national or international names of laymen stand out above the Association horizon. The leaders in great cities or countries or international fields, if one attempted to name them, are not laymen but salaried officers like Shipton. The Langdons in America, the Williamses in England, the Dürselens of Germany, and the Perrots of Geneva are largely succeeded by salaried officials. The work of the organization has become so vast and so technical that only employed experts who give their entire time to it can lead. Necessary as this is it is not without certain dangers. For it is imperative that the authority for the policies of the Association should be vested in the hands of the laymen. The laymen interested in the Young Men's Christian Association should study the careers of Langdon and Williams and reassert their position in the organization. This is of vital importance if the organization is to be a progressive spiritual power. The layman is far less likely to institutionalize the Association or to make it an end in itself instead of a means to an end. In all the great crises

of this period the laymen decided the immediate issue rightly. It is true that the Americans were diverted from the field of work for young men by lay leaders, but the more important issue was the founding of an international agency of supervision, and on this question their judgment was unerring.

They were equally sound on the great question of the relation of the Association to the slavery issue. The Associations of 1855-1861 lacked the splendid leadership which secretaries have since given, but they demonstrated the value of laymen in Christian service.

All social and religious movements seem to face this difficulty. In the Hebrew Theocracy the priest was likely to make ceremony take the place of worship and in the Christian Church the ecclesiastic is always in danger of substituting the form for the spirit. The secretary is in danger of mistaking the means for the end and thus magnifying the institution instead of the cause it was intended to promote.

The layman is in danger of overenthusiasm and emotion and from absorption in his own occupation is often unable to give consecutive time and effort. He is apt to be narrow and superficial. But the volunteer worker is in a more detached position than the employed officer and so capable of calmer judgment. Progress is most likely to be secured when the employed officer originates policies which must be approved by the layman who should have final authority. This became the established practice of the Young Men's Christian Association in America because of the experiences of the pre-Civil-War period.

The matter of next importance was the independence of the local Association. This development we owe to the sound judgment of the leaders of this period. The great step forward was establishing the Central Committee as an agency of supervision. This



has developed in recent times into the most extensive world-wide supervisory body in existence. Was the American International Committee to become a governing body or to develop as the servant of the local Associations? It was fear of centralization and particularly that the committee might force the local Associations to take a stand on the slavery issue which led the leaders of 1855-1861 to deny all authority to the Central Committee and to insist upon a purely advisory relationship.

It is remarkable how this release from the burden of bearing authority led to the development of the Central Committee. In later years no other agency had the needed information, no other body had the employed officers, the necessary funds, or the promoting ability to plan and inaugurate great policies. The relationship has been one of advice and service. In the early days the financial problem was insignificant. In recent times the fact that the employed secretaries of the International Committee to such a large extent raise great sums of money for the current expenses of the committee tends to lessen the control by the local Associations. The agency raising the money for any enterprise usually desires to control its expenditure. The danger is that while theoretically the local Association is independent, practically the international group of able experts will have a monopoly of the information and influence necessary for action.

One is reminded of Herbert Spencer's remark that the regulative agency of any organism tends to appropriate advantage to itself at the expense of the other parts of the organism. Local autonomy concurrent with central efficiency demands a proper balance in relationships which is always difficult to maintain. The Young Men's Christian Association has established an equilibrium by providing for an advisory relationship. By this method the local society solicits

the help of the supervisory body and the supervisory body can only maintain its power and prestige by being able to render the service needed. This was the great contribution of this period to the American work.\*

It is an interesting fact that the early conventions refused to dictate the conditions for active membership in the local Association. The first convention recommended the evangelical Church basis but voted that to enforce this was a matter beyond its jurisdiction. The second convention ruled that compulsion in this matter by a convention was out of order and contented itself with a recommendation. This was the true position for the convention to take. The Portland Convention of 1869 introduced a ground of bitterness, which will continue until it is removed, by refusing to recognize Associations admitting members of Unitarian and Universalist churches to active

\* But this is not democracy. Democracy does not consist in independence of the local individual nor of the local group of individuals, otherwise the United States would be but an enormous number of unrelated persons or neighborhoods or synthetic classes. Democracy is a system of relationships whereby the whole people control and the whole people are controlled. This pre-Civil War period of confederation has contributed a condition to the twentieth century Associations wherein it is euphony to call them a "movement" excepting on special occasions or for special causes. The Associations are not in fact a democracy either locally nor nationally. They come nearer being a bureaucracy locally, and competing principalities nationally, tempered by benevolence, humanity, piety, imitation, and an indomitable purpose to succeed; but as an example of democracy, they are very nearly free from the taint of either pure democracy or representative democracy. The American Association movement still is in somewhat similar condition to the colonial federation in which the various colonies had such a maladjustment and poor articulation that the nation itself was flouted from within and without, particularly from within.

The Association Movement yet awaits that unity of mind and purpose wherein a nationally democratic federation, with control from the bottom up, will be secured; where its officials will be clothed with the proper supervisory authority, subject to definite controls, and where the local units must assume financial responsibility.—R. E. L.

membership. This amounts to an invasion of the autonomy of the local Association. As a matter of fact, the basis has never been drastically enforced. Numerous college Associations have bases of their own. Other Associations evade the tests by subterfuges. There are large denominations accepted by the Association, such as the Congregationalists, who repudiate the doctrinal statements of the Portland test and are thus ineligible if the test were carried out.

In doctrinal teaching the Associations in all parts of the world held to the five leading evangelical doctrines stated in traditional conservative form. They believed in the deity of Jesus and worshiped Him as one of the Trinity, in the infallible authority of the Bible in matters of doctrine, in the fall of man and the substitutionary view of the atonement. God accepted repentant sinners because Jesus died on the cross. They believed in eternal punishment for the wicked and that salvation was redemption not only from sin but from eternal torment. These doctrines were in no way originated by the Young Men's Christian Association but were taught by the churches which most of the members attended. The great revival of this period in America was possible because of this general unanimity of belief. Dr. Thomas W. Chalmers in his volume on "The Noon Prayer Meeting" (p. 54) states, "All . . . concurred in the belief that men are lost by nature, that salvation is freely offered to them through the blood of the cross, and that it is the province of the Holy Spirit to convert them to the believing reception of the gracious provision thus made."

He gives an account of a lawyer who had formerly regarded Jesus as a great teacher who testified (p. 102): "I did not think of Him as the Crucified, as bearing my sins in His own body on the tree, as suffering the just for the unjust, that He might bring us

to God, as wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquity and the chastisement of our peace being upon Him. I am here a sinner hoping I have been pardoned through Him as my Saviour." With the acceptance of these statements of belief so uniform it is the more surprising that the conventions did not insist on an evangelical Church test for active membership, but it must be borne in mind that the great anxiety of the leaders was to establish the Confederation and secure recognition by the local Associations of the Central Committee. It may be added that outside of New England the conservative view was so dominant that no enforcement of belief seemed necessary.

The attitude toward the Catholic Church was quite generally hostile.\* In the second New York Report (p. 9), the corresponding secretary, C. A. Davidson, and President Howard Crosby speak approvingly of the Catholic Association at Cork, Ireland. The report states:

"A Young Men's Christian Association has also been recently started in Cork, Ireland, under the auspices of Roman Catholic young men.

"We regard this movement with great interest, for although much of error is mingled with the faith of this body, yet we trust the efforts of these young men to attain the end proposed in their constitution will

\* The Association of course inherited the anathemas of the Catholic Church against Protestantism and has always been the recipient of the latent, and sometimes the open, opposition of the Catholic hierarchy. Strangely contrasted with this is the very large use made of the facilities of the modern Associations by Catholic young men generally. The eagerness and appreciation with which they made use of Association privileges seem to be only intensified by the opposition of certain high Catholic authorities.

Many of the Associations have studiously avoided all efforts at proselyting and are only anxious to help the Catholic young men in their membership to become better examples of the high ethical teaching of their own Bible and Church.—R. E. L.

be crowned by the blessing of heaven. Our hope is strengthened by the following extract from their constitution.

“The object of this society is the mutual improvement and the extension of the spirit of religion and brotherly love.

“The means adopted will be prayer, frequentation of the sacraments, public lectures, a library, and reading room. Meeting for public prayer shall be held on one evening in every week and it shall be compulsory on every member to attend such meetings at least once a month.”

This attitude, however, was not the one taken in London, where the ninth report of the Association states (p. 58), “It is not with unmingled regret that your committee notice that the Cork Branch of the Young Men’s Christian Association has to contend against an efficiently organized Roman Catholic Young Men’s Christian Society which has been recently formed. It has already 500 members.”

This pre-Civil-War period saw the beginning of emigration to America on a large scale from Roman Catholic countries, particularly from Southern Ireland. It was during this period that anti-Catholic societies arose and the “Know-Nothing” party had its brief history. There were few if any Catholic associate members in the Association. The general feeling in the American Associations was probably voiced in the report of President Crosby’s predecessor, O. P. Woodford. He said (First New York Report, 1853, p. 11): “It is well for us to remember that there is another Association which takes to itself the name of Jesus. . . . Its influence upon the world has been great for it has had and still has its branches in almost every country—its activity is ceaseless, its ambition boundless. Cut off from the ordinary sympathies of our nature, its members thirst for power,

and leave no means untried for its attainment. Painful as it is for us to contend against any who bear the name of Christ, we must contend against them, as enemies of the best interests of mankind. Upon them the most odious tyrannies of the civilized world seem to rest. . . . They deny to the people the precious word which God has given, with the special injunction that they shall search it to avoid error and to find salvation. . . . Ignorance, immorality, oppression, and decay are the inheritance of the people whom they control. They are the agents of a potentate who claims to sit paramount over priests and kings and they sustain his claims secretly or openly with ceaseless vigilance. . . . The presence here of an active band of priests who owe allegiance to a foreign prince and who allow no toleration, no Bible, no freedom of thought, no protest against persecution we regard as a dangerous element."

In a later report of the London Association (Eighteenth Report, London, 1863, p. 25) it is stated that "the idolatrous Church of Rome is extending its influence over the masses of the people, adding new attractions to those by which it has hitherto sought to entrap the unwary and pressing with persistent zeal for recognition by the State and support from the public funds of the country. . . . Those twin sisters, Infidelity and Romanism, thus strengthened in themselves, find free course for their machinations through the supineness of a nation which owes its all of position and privilege and its liberties civil and religious to the Bible and the Protestant faith."

These statements from London and New York show the prevailing attitude of intense Protestantism and unfriendly feeling toward the Catholic Church on the part of most Association leaders. There has been a recrudescence of this feeling since the great World War. This has been aroused in Europe by the

activity of the Association in the newly created states on the continent which has called out protests from Catholic prelates.\*

In America the Knights of Columbus have increased the tension by unfriendly acts and propaganda. The Pope has issued a bull denouncing the Association as a dangerous organization. This situation is quite unlike that which prevailed during the World War and for a number of years prior in America. The adoption of the fourfold program for the development of the whole man in body, mind, and spirit made the Association buildings attractive to all classes of young men. Catholic young men were welcomed as associate members in large numbers. They came as "beneficiaries" not as "participants" into the Association. No attempt was made to proselyte and a most harmonious relationship existed not toward the Roman Church but toward young Catholic laymen. This developed during the World War often into fellowship and friendship which unfortunately have waned considerably since.

During the period from 1855 to 1861 the Associations were strongly Protestant in their feeling and thoroughly conservative in their doctrinal teaching.

On the continent in the French-speaking area the young men with Christian aspirations were surrounded with such an unfriendly environment that their instinctive longing for fellowship and mutual encouragement linked them together, while in Germany social cleavage between classes assured that a work for journeymen apprentices would not encroach on any other field. In America the New York and

\* These protests only seem to have intensified the desire of those European peoples to domesticate the Association amongst them. The Association has no inclination to warfare, it does not set itself chiefly to credal or dogmatic propaganda. Its main object is service of its fellowmen in what it conceives to be the Master's spirit.—  
R. E. L.

Buffalo Associations were the only large organizations which persisted in limiting their efforts to young men. The revival swept the great body of Associations into its current and made them laymen's societies for general evangelism. It is conceivable that Christian young men of ardent zeal might be banded together for such a purpose and that they might develop a permanent organization. This was practically Dwight L. Moody's idea for the Association. It is very doubtful, however, if such an organization would have been more than ephemeral. Such an aim is too transient in character and such a society would constantly conflict with the work of the ministry.

While the American Associations failed in defining the field of the Association they were all unanimous in insisting that its aim was purely religious. There was but one clearly defined aim. This was to win young men to accept Jesus as their Saviour. All "secular" agencies were of an inferior character and should be eliminated whenever they ceased to promote this aim. There was little or no conception of the unity of personality or the unity of life. The body was only the home of the soul during its brief period of probation on earth and as a source of temptation was to be controlled and kept under. Libraries and educational classes were expensive and only to be introduced where necessary and always to be made subordinate to the religious work.

Recreation was grudgingly admitted to be necessary to youth but should be employed only if it could not be otherwise secured, and then only guardedly. The conception of the Association as an agency for the cultivation of Christian manhood later championed by McBurney and defined by Gulick was unknown. But for the development of this larger and broader program the historian must conclude that the Association movement would never have evolved



into an important organization or made any distinctive contribution to religious life or thought. It was this new social ideal evolved in America and promoted by the American International Committee that gave the Association fresh vigor and power, that made the American movement preeminent, that led large numbers of devoted men to become employed officers. It was this conception that made the American type of work sought after by leaders in mission fields and later engrafted the American ideal of Association endeavor upon the Associations of the Old World.

This broad conception of religious work as an effort to develop the whole man has transformed religious endeavor in the churches. It is in sharp contrast with the ascetic ideal of religion and is slowly substituting the social ideal in its place. Religious education, recreation, and social service have become the program of the modern community church. These ideas found their first expression in the Association which has pioneered them in the face of relentless opposition both from within and from without its membership.\*

In 1857 Darwin published his "Origin of Species."

\*The conviction will grow upon the intelligent reader of these pages that almost elaborate efforts were made during this period of the Association's history, on the part of the ultra-conservative and oftentimes reactionary element, to capture and control this new society. The religious progressives of the day under review in Germany, Great Britain, and America, did not dominate the organization. Langdon was the saving element in the United States, and the genial spirit of George Williams in England softened the avowedly dogmatic position of the British Associations. Their formulated documents were very much less responsive than were their personal and organized relationships to the need of young men.

The student will examine with keen appreciation the saving influences which brought the American Associations along with the intelligence of the times and achieved the process of freeing them ultimately from the good, but it must be said in frankness, uneducated leaders who too often attempted to control them.

The standardization of the educational process within them, the founding of colleges for the education of the secretarial staff, the

This appeared unnoticed by Association leaders but the doctrine of evolution was destined to change the temper of religious thought and create an atmosphere in which a new conception of man, of nature, of the Bible, and of God would grow. The physical universe was seen to be subject to law. It was soon recognized that the spiritual nature of man was equally subject to the laws of the same God. Religious education, conceived of as the development of the entire personality in all its powers of body, mind, and spirit, became the program of the Association—evolution applied to the expanding life of the individual.

Froebel and Pestalozzi introduced into education the idea that its aim should be the development of the entire personality. The Association was the first agency to make use of this conception in religious work. This was, however, brought about empirically by the method of trial and error; the survival of the fittest. There was no conscious philosophy of the movement, the leaders had no plan of working for the development of the entire personality and leading the individual into social service. The Associations that did this succeeded and the philosophy of the movement was formulated afterwards. It was the new Association which arose after the American Civil War which developed this new program. Those societies which adopted it survived and grew; the others disappeared. The progressive Associations secured employed officers, property, and members. The purely evangelistic societies, based on the narrower conception of personality and the ascetic view of re-

fact that hundreds of these units are in universities and colleges where the stream of thought flows more freely and is less often dammed up of purpose, and the increasing desire of the Association to serve the unprivileged as well as the privileged classes, will bring the movement forward out of narrow beginnings into a great, progressive, Christian society, devoted to the commonwealth of God.—R. E. L.

ligion, were burdened with debts, were without secretaries or property, and found few supporters.

We must pay tribute to the sincerity and far-reaching influence of the leaders of the Confederation period. They were endeavoring to do a purely religious work but they builded better than they knew. In permitting the so-called secular agencies even a subordinate place they were laying foundations for the broader educational program of later years. They were discovering the vital needs of young men and learning how to develop personality.

The Christian college was seeking to give the same development in a more intensive way to the young men who could devote four or more years to living under its régime. The American college seeks to develop the whole man in body, mind, and spirit, and train him for citizenship. The Young Men's Christian Association of today seeks to render in a more popular way this same service to the vast multitude of young men who cannot attend college. The Association has become the all-round educational agency including religious training for the young man in daily life instead of a purely evangelistic agency.

The leaders of this period developed the international organization and laid the local foundations which are making this idea possible.

It may be said that the Association was founded and continued until 1861 upon an ascetic ideal of religion, a conservative, dogmatic, and traditional theology, and the conception of personality implied in the doctrine of "total depravity." Evolution was to give a new conception of the evolving spirit from childhood to manhood. Upon this foundation the Association was to construct its new program of religious education for the training of the whole personality. The social awakening was to give a new, deeper, and

broader idea of service which was to embrace the whole of life and all human relationships.

Upon this foundation the Association was to build its program of social service which was destined to influence the work of the Church and all agencies for human betterment throughout the world. How this new type of Association arose will be told in the story of the American Associations following the Civil War.

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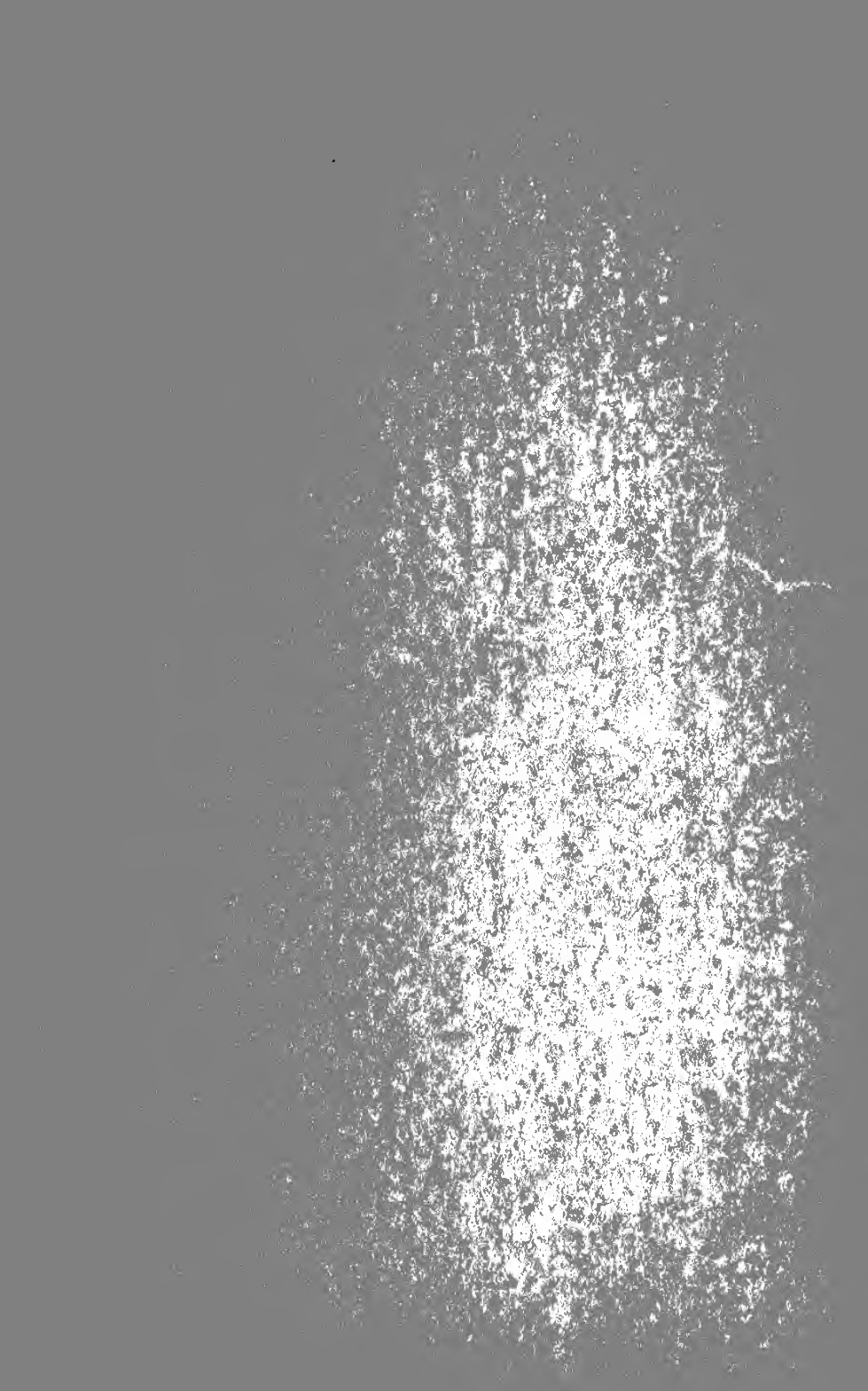


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